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R.O.D

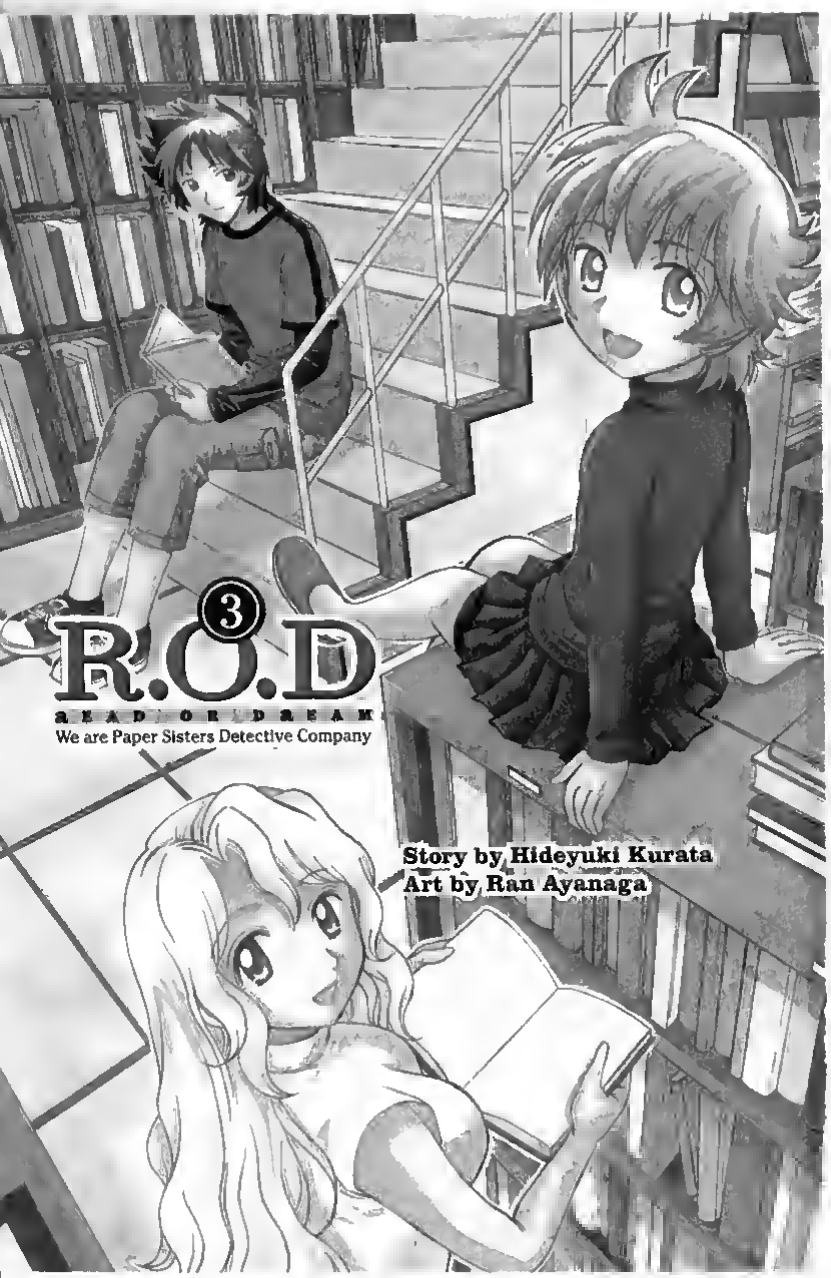
READ OR DREAM

We are Paper Sisters Detective Company

3

story by
Hideyuki Kurata

art by
Ran Ayanaga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R.O.D
READ OR DREAM
We are Paper Sisters Detective Company
Story by Hideyuki Kurata
Art by Ran Ayanaga

CHAPTER 16

R.O.D

READ OR DREAM

We are Paper Sisters Detective Company

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THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN TO THIS USED-BOOK STORE. IT'S GREAT.
WHEN I GET HOME, I'LL HAVE TO TELL MICHELLE..
!!
HUH ?
NO, NOTHING SPECIAL.
LOOKING FOR SOME-THING?
OH? YOU CAN TELL JUST BY LOOKING AT THE SPINES ?
BUT THEY'RE ALL SO INTER-ESTING ...
ALL OF THESE BOOKS ARE BEGGING TO BE READ.
JUST A FEEL-ING...

OH, WOW...
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANY OF THESE BOOKS BEFORE.

ANITA!
DAKKA
DAKKA
I'M HOME ...
GRP
IT'S MAGGIE!
SHE'S ACTING WEIRD!
EEEK!
YOU'RE THE WEIRD ONE, MICH!
TH
MP
OH, MY! WELCOME HOME, ANI! ♪
JUST TAKE A LOOK AT HER!
WHAT DO YOU ...
UM... MAGS?

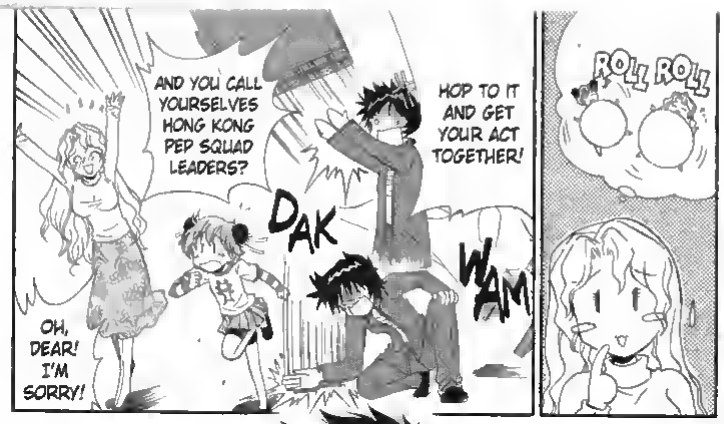
the 24 FACES of MAGGIE MUI
YOU'VE NEVER BEEN IN THIS SHOP BEFORE, HAVE YOU?
ALL RIGHT... WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THIS BOOK?
WOW...
WHEN YOU'VE BEEN IN THIS BUSINESS FOR A WHILE, YOU DEVELOP A SIXTH SENSE.

NOK
NOK
BRR
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IT'S ME, MAGGIE!
YOU'RE LITTLE MISS FORGETFUL...
... AREN'T YOU?
tee hee
TAP TAP
WH-WHO IS THAT?
NO...
WHY, I'M GOING TO START CRYING!
OH, MY! DON'T YOU TRUST ME, ANI?
IS THAT REALLY MAGGIE?
COME ON, TELL ME. WEIRD, RIGHT?

LOOK, I EVEN MADE SOME FROGGIES!
I JUST BAKED COOKIES!
PERFECT TIMING!
THEY'RE SPECIAL, JUST FOR YOU! ♪
SWISH♡

UGH...
KR ASH
THUD...
...
LET'S HAVE SOME TEA...
URGH...
SPL AT
HURRK!
MAGGIE!
MAGS!
...
SHE REALLY IS SICK!

I DON'T KNOW...
SHE CAME HOME AFTER SHOPPING AND STARTED READING A BOOK THEN SHE CHANGED...
WHAT'S GOING ON?
BOO HOO HOO...
WHOA
A BOOK?
SHOOF
SHOOF...
THAT'S THE END OF THIS SAD ROMANCE!
FWAP
ANI AND SISTER GONZALES... SHALL WE SIT DOWN FOR AFTERNOON TEA? ♪
TA-DAH!
AND MY NAME ISN'T GONZALES!
AFTER-NOON? IT'S EVENING!

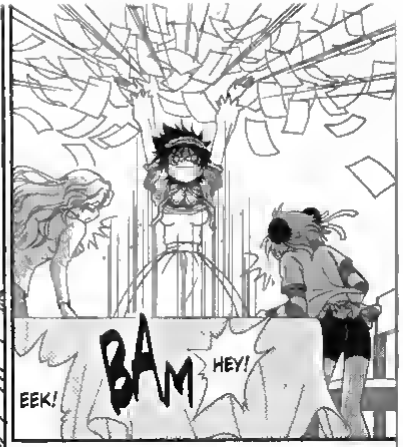

AND YOU CALL YOURSELVES HONG KONG PEP SQUAD LEADERS?
HOP TO IT AND GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER!
ROLL ROLL
DAK
WAM
OH, DEAR! I'M SORRY!

I DEDICATE 100 RABBIT HOPS TO KOWLOON!
READY ?

WHAT'S CAUSING THIS?
SHE'S WEIRD... TOO WEIRD.

ONE, TWO!
ONE, TWO!

MAGS ?
TA-DAH!


EEK!
BAM
HEY!

AH!

!!
YOU'RE SLACKING!

YOU'RE A COUPLE OF SOFT ROLLY-POLLIES WHO CAME FROM PLANET ROLLY-POLLY ON THE SPACESHIP ROLLY-POLLY!
YOU LAZE AROUND FROM MORNING TO NIGHT.

MAGGIE ?
YIKES! SHE LOOKS INDECENT!
BEEK!
FWASH
NOT AGAIN!
I'M MAGGIE CHINA, KING OF HONG KONG!
I'M NOT MAGGIE!

TA-DAAAH!
OH...
ONE, TWO!
ONE, TWO!
AND YOU KNOCK IT OFF!
BOING
BOING
SPLAT
UGH.
MAGGIE!
...
LOOKS LIKE THIS IS THE END OF MY ACT.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
OH, MAGGIE... YOU HAD MY HEART POUNDING LIKE A DRUM!
IT WAS ALL AN ACT?
HEH HEH HEH ...

SHING
THIS PLACE IS TOO SMALL FOR MY PALACE.
ENLARGE IT, MY PUPPETS!
!!
EEEEK!
BOOM
AARGH!
SLAM
WAAH!
THMP
CUT IT OUT!
WIP

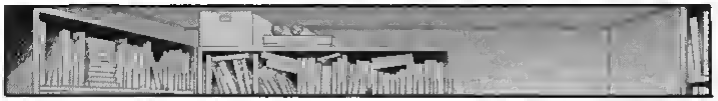
SHUT UP!
EEEK!
SHE HASN'T CHANGED.
MAGGIE CHI FOR SHORT.
SHOOM
MY FIRST MINIONS WILL BE THE LITTLE SHRIMP AND THE ONE WITH THE KNOCKERS!
MY PLAN TO TAKE OVER THE WORLD IS NOW UNDERWAY!
RRRRRRRRRRM
MAGGIE! YOU CAN'T BE SAYING THIS!
THAT'S RIGHT! IT'S TRUE THAT ANITA IS FLAT-CHESTED, BUT...
IT'S NOT THAT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THAT'S THE BOOK THAT MAGGIE WAS READING! NOW I SEE!
MAGS...

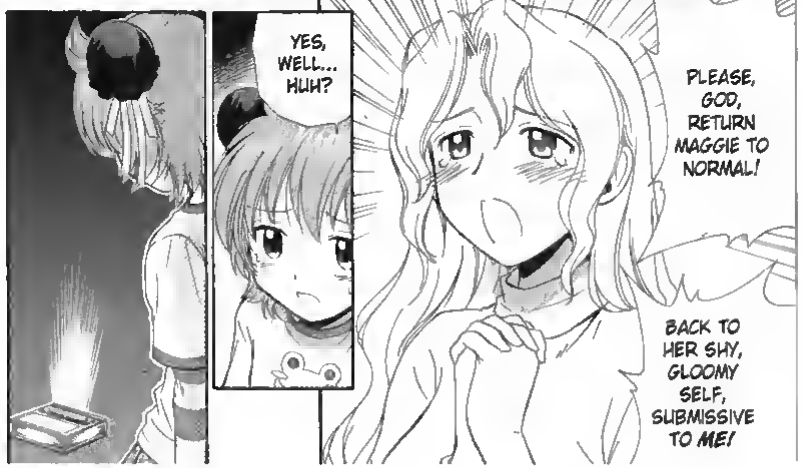
THIS BOOK IS DESIGNED TO BRING OUT THE HIDDEN QUALITIES IN MAGGIE!
THE MINDS OF BILLY MILLIGAN
Daniel Keyes
THERE'S A BOOK BY DANIEL KEYES CALLED THE MINDS OF BILLY MILLIGAN. IT'S ABOUT A PERSON WITH 24 DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES.

WHAT HAPPENS IF WE RIP IT UP?
PROBABLY.
I DON'T KNOW. BUT I THINK WE SHOULD DO IT WHILE HER NORMAL PERSONALITY IS OUT...
SO THIS BOOK IS MAKING MAGGIE ACT WEIRD?
BOOK FANATICS CAN REACH LEVELS FAR BEYOND THE ORDINARY.
WHERE DID SHE BUY THIS?

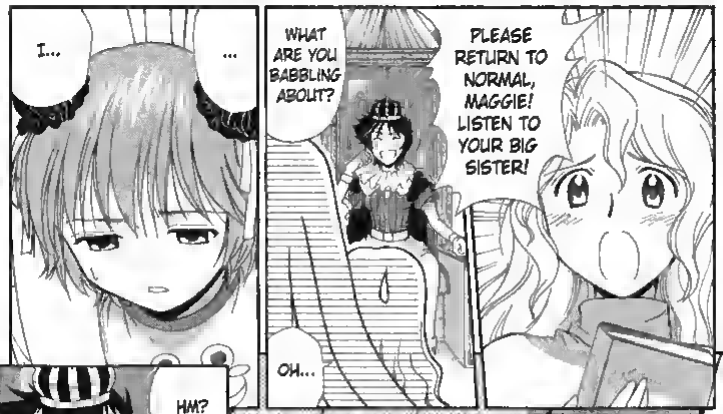
BWA HA HA HA!



hff
hff
hff
hff

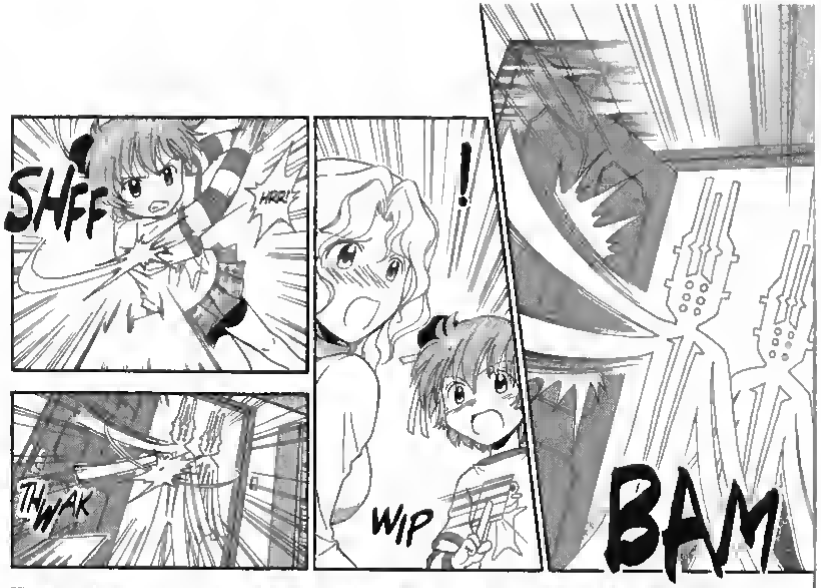

YES, WELL... HUH?
PLEASE, GOD, RETURN MAGGIE TO NORMAL!
BACK TO HER SHY, GLOOMY SELF, SUBMISSIVE TO ME!

I HEARBY ESTABLISH MAGGIELAND, AND APPOINT YOU IN CHARGE OF RECEPTION AND MEALS!
YOU TWO HAVE CAUSED ME A LOT OF TROUBLE.


I...
...
WHAT ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT?
PLEASE RETURN TO NORMAL, MAGGIE! LISTEN TO YOUR BIG SISTER!
OH...

HM?

EVEN IF YOU WEREN'T GREAT...EVEN IF YOU WEREN'T VERY GIRLY, OR VERY STRONG...
...I LIKED THE MAGGIE YOU WERE *BEFORE* BETTER...


SHFF
HRR!
!
THWAK
WIP
BAM

EEP...
HEY! LEMME GO!

OH!
FWP
FWP
FWP
FWP
?
!
TUP
...ANI
...TA
...?
HURRY UP!!
IT IS A WASTE...
!!
NOW, MICH! THE BOOK!
BAM
DAK
OOF!

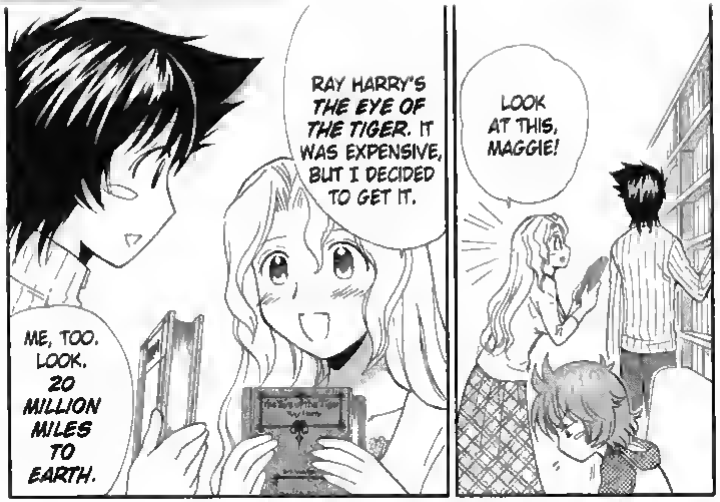
AFTER ALL, SHE WAS MY MAGS!
...
ANITA...
PLEASE, MAGS! PLEASE GO BACK TO NORMAL!
GO BACK TO BEING A SHY, MESSY KLUTZ WHO DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO CLEAN UP A ROOM!

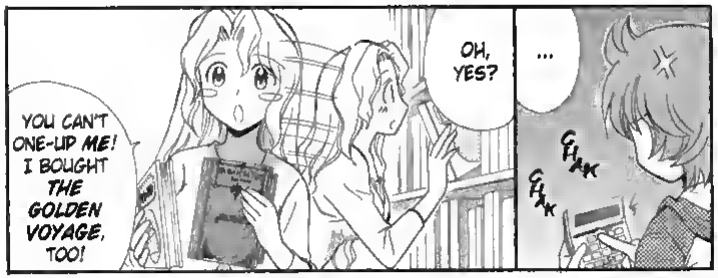
MAGGIE!
HEY!
MAGS!
NOW, NOW.
NOBODY KNOWS HOW SOMEONE'S MIND WORKS, NOT EVEN THEIR OWN.
I KNOW JUST WHAT YOU'VE BEEN THINKING, MAGS.
BUT... I DON'T REMEMBER ANY-THING...

TA DA
SH OOF
OH SUCH A SHAME
BAH
BUDDA
BUDDA
BUDDA
SHAA

CHAPTER 17

WELL, I AM THE OLDER SISTER. TEE HEE HEE...
NO FAIR! YOU'RE MAKING YOURSELF OUT TO BE THE "GOOD GIRL"!
THIS IS THE MAGGIE WE BOTH LOVE BEST.
ISN'T THAT ENOUGH?
MICHELLE...
THANKS.
the 7,600 FACES of MICHELLE CHAN
LOOKING FOR A BOOK?
HELLO, YOUNG LADY
YES!


RAY HARRY'S THE EYE OF THE TIGER. IT WAS EXPENSIVE, BUT I DECIDED TO GET IT.
LOOK AT THIS, MAGGIE!
ME, TOO. LOOK. 20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH.


OH, YES?
...
CHAK
CHAK
YOU CAN'T ONE-UP ME! I BOUGHT THE GOLDEN VOYAGE, TOO!

...
WELL, ACTUALLY ...
CHAK
CHAK
CHAK
...I ALSO PICKED UP JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS.

IN THAT CASE, I'M GOING BACK AND BUYING...
CHAK
CHAK
CHAK
-43323
MRC
WHAT? THAT'S PLAYING DIRTY!

Invoice
No.
13 675 Hk$
BILL

...

WE'RE IN THE RED.

THEY'RE ABOUT TO SHUT OFF OUR WATER!
DON'T WORRY. A PERSON CAN LIVE 30 DAYS ON WATER AND BOOKS.
WE'RE IN THE RED AGAIN THIS MONTH! IN ANOTHER MONTH, WE'LL STARVE TO DEATH!
WOOM
A LIFE WITHOUT BOOKS WOULD NOT BE NORMAL!
I AGREE WITH MICHELLE.
IF YOU'D JUST STOP BUYING BOOKS, WE COULD LIVE LIKE NORMAL PEOPLE.
R I P
THAT'S WHY WE'RE GOING TO CHANGE OUR WAY OF THINKING!
I FIGURED YOU'D SAY THAT.

WHAM
OVER MY DEAD BODY!!
WHAT I DON'T GET ENOUGH OF ARE MONEY AND PATIENCE!
YOU TWO! SIT DOWN!
ANITA! YOU'VE BEEN WORKING ON YOUR KICK!
ARE YOU LASHING OUT BECAUSE YOU AREN'T GETTING ENOUGH FAMILIAL LOVE?
THO O MP

OOPS!
UM
ANYTHING BUT WRITER, CARTOONIST, ILLUSTRATOR OR POP STAR!
YES, YES, YES!
BAM
SIGH
DON'T YOU HAVE ANYTHING, MAGS?
HUH?
MAYBE A SOMMELIER ...
AHH
SOME-THING LIKE THAT... A BOOK SOM-MELIER.
SOMMELIER? SOMEONE WHO SUGGESTS WINES IN A RESTAUR-ANT?

OUR GOAL: TO BE RICH!
THE BOURGEOIS LIFE OF OUR DREAMS!
MILK
MILK
WE HAVE TO SWITCH TO ANOTHER JOB!
OOO..
THE PROBLEM IS THAT DETECTIVE WORK ISN'T PAYING!
HM...
BUT WHAT SORT OF WORK SHOULD WE DO?
...
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU TWO WOULD LIKE TO DO?
I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT IT YET.

IT'S A 1912 VINTAGE.
...WHAT DID YOU THINK OF IT?
FWP
FWP
YOU TRULY ARE THE MOST KNOWLEDGE-ABLE WHEN IT COMES TO BOOKS!
TUP
MERCI FOR THE COMPLIMENT.
IT WAS TRES BIEN AND BON JOUR!
OHHHHHH
HA HA HA HA HA HA

WEL-COME.
SIGH
OH... MY MIND IS STARVING.
WHAT DO YOU RECOMMEND TODAY?
WE HAVE A NOVEL BY LUNAR JUST IN FROM FRANCE.
I'LL TAKE THAT.

ANITA... HOW COULD YOU?
SCRUB SCRUB
FORGET ABOUT BOOKS! WE'D GET EVEN FEWER CUSTOMERS THAN WE GET NOW!
BUT HOW?
COME ON! WE HAVE PAPER POWERS! LET'S TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THAT!
LIKE I SAID...
WELL, UH... LET'S SEE...

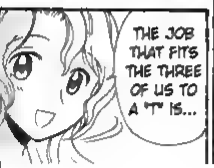
AHHHHHH...
WIK WIK
!
SQUIK
SWAP
I'LL DO MY VERY BEST...
THAT'S LOVELY, MAGGIE!
LET'S FRANCHISE THIS IDEA AROUND THE WORLD!
OHH!
?!
TEE HEE! OH, MAGGIE!

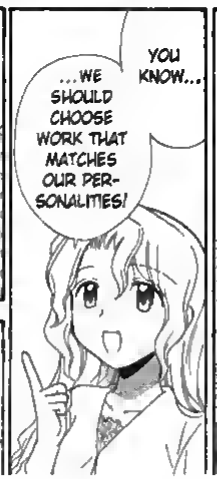
...

BECAUSE YOU DON'T READ, ALL YOU CAN COME UP WITH ARE CLICHÉS FROM OLD TV SHOWS.
YOU'RE SUCH A CHILD.

WAAAA
WE'D END UP EVEN POORER!

AG-GRES-SIVE ANITA ...
QUIET MAGGIE ...
AND ME, THE HEALER.


THE JOB THAT FITS THE THREE OF US TO A "T" IS...


YOU KNOW...
...WE SHOULD CHOOSE WORK THAT MATCHES OUR PER-SONALITIES!

WE'D NEVER BE ABLE TO DO WORK THAT REQUIRES SUCH PER-SEVERANCE.
NOOO... NOOO... STOP IT, MAGS!
DON'T MOVE

BIG SIS... I'M HUNGRY ...
FLOP
OH...

JUST BE-CAUSE WE'RE THE PAPER SISTERS, THEY'RE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF US...
OOH...
SOB SOB

MICHELLE... THEY'RE ASKING FOR THE THOUSAND-CRANE SETS.
IF WE CAN'T DO THEM BY TOMORROW, THEY WON'T SEND US ANY MORE WORK...

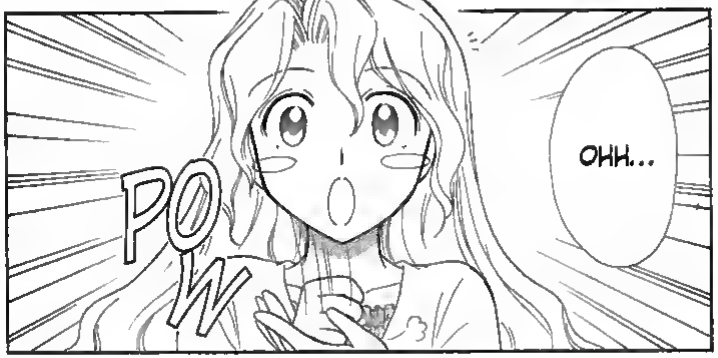
AFTER WE DELIVER THESE, I'LL GIVE YOU SOME SUGAR WATER.
BE PATIENT.
BRRNG
BRRNG

HELLO.
WE'RE THE PAPER TRIO!

READY? AND...

BAM!
R.O.D!

WHAT ABOUT YOU, ANITA?
I GO TO NEW RELEASES
I START WITH THE MAGAZINES ...
WHEN YOU GO TO A BOOK-STORE, WHERE DO YOU START LOOKING?
SAY, EVERY-ONE!


POW
OHH...

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

THE PAPER TRIO IS NO COMPETITION AT ALL!
BITTER RIVAL COMEDY TEAM
HEH
NO ONE REALIZED THAT THIS PERFORMANCE WOULD ONE DAY CHANGE THE HISTORY OF HONG KONG ENTERTAINMENT...
YOU'LL GROW AND THRIVE UPON THE STAGE!
LET THE DETRACTORS SLANDER YOU, PAPER TRIO!
MYSTERIOUS HIGHLY-CAPABLE DIRECTOR

FOOM
SO YOU WOULDN'T GO?
WHAK
I WOULDN'T GO THERE IN THE FIRST PLACE!
SHIING...
R.O.D!
...
WAPPAWAPPA

!
YOU MEAN THAT NOVELIST?

THIS...
WHY, THIS IS FROM YUNFAT!

"I'M WRITING TO THANK YOU ONCE AGAIN..."

SQUIK
SQUIK
SQUIK
SQUIK
EEK!
BUT IT SEEMED LIKE SO MUCH FUN...

SIGH...

SIGH...
AT LEAST LET THE AUDIENCE LIKE US IN YOUR IMAGINATION!

LET'S PAY THE WATER BILL, AT LEAST.
I GUESS WE'LL STARVE NEXT MONTH. WHAT A SHORT LIFE IT'S BEEN...
MAYBE WE'RE NOT CUT OUT FOR ANY WORK.

OH?

SHF

I'M GLAD...
SO, HE WAS ABLE TO WRITE A NEW NOVEL ...
WANT TO KEEP AT IT A LITTLE LONGER?
...BUT IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE WE CAN DO ANYTHING ELSE.
SHF
I DON'T THINK WE'RE CUT OUT TO BE DETECTIVES ...

I FINISHED MY NEW NOVEL TODAY. I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO WRITE SO QUICKLY.
...FOR ARRANGING FOR ME TO MEET KON FU.
...BUT NOW I FEEL LIKE I'VE REGAINED THE PASSION I FELT AS A NEW WRITER
WHEN I WAS IN A SLUMP, I WORRIED THAT I WASN'T CUT OUT FOR THIS JOB...
I OWE THIS TO YOU AND KON FU.

LET'S NOT LOSE THE BATTLE AGAINST HARDSHIP! FIGHT, SISTERS!
RIGHT!

MAYBE I'LL GET MY DRIVER'S LICENSE... WE'D BE ABLE TO COVER MORE GROUND.
I'LL GO PASS OUT FLYERS!
SHF

CHAPTER 18

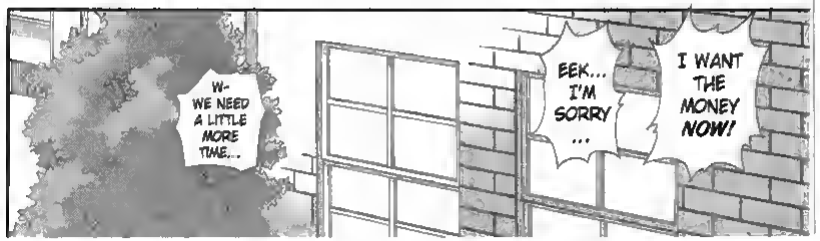
TUP
WITH MORE WORK COMING IN, WE CAN LIVE LARGE!
EAT UP, EVERY-ONE!

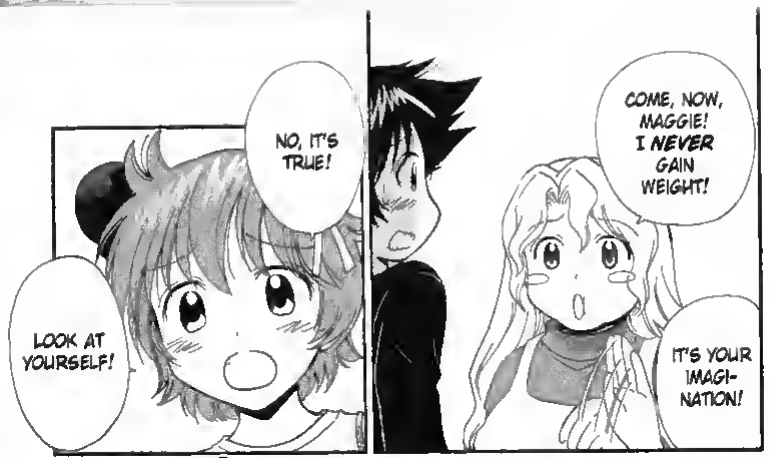
...
GOD IS PROBABLY REWARDING US FOR GETTING ALONG SO WELL AS SISTERS!

MICHELLE
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'VE SEEN SOME EXOTIC BEAST.

NOK NOK
COME IN!

SLAM
HURRY UP AND PAY THE RENT, WILL YOU?
YIKES! THE LAND-LORD!

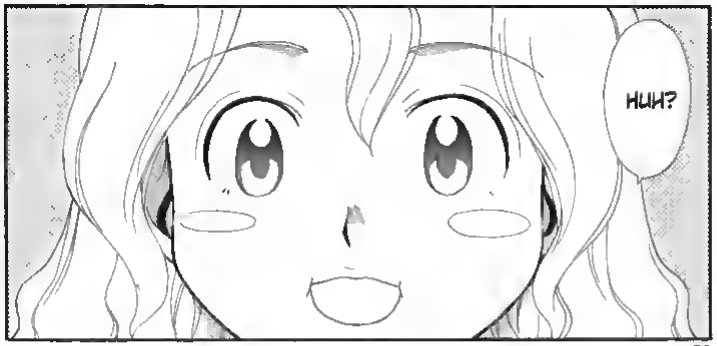

W-WE NEED A LITTLE MORE TIME...
EEK... I'M SORRY ...
I WANT THE MONEY NOW!


NO, IT'S TRUE!
LOOK AT YOURSELF!
COME, NOW, MAGGIE! I NEVER GAIN WEIGHT!
IT'S YOUR IMAGI-NATION!

GRRRRR
I'LL BET YOU'RE TRYING TO GET MY SHARE OF DINNER!
I WON'T GIVE IT UP!
RR
YOU, TOO, ANITA?
OH, I KNOW!

...
WUp
COME ON!
GO AND WEIGH YOURSELF! YOU'LL SEE AT A GLANCE!
THAT'S NOT WHAT...

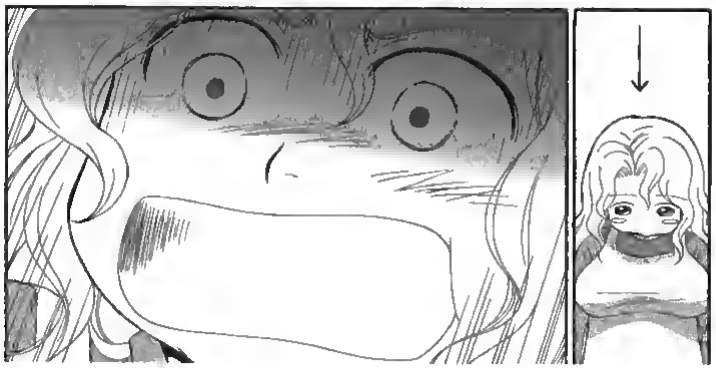
YOU'VE PUT ON SOME WEIGHT, HAVEN'T YOU?
CHAPTER 18


HUH?

DOOM
HFF
HFF!
EEK! I HAVE GAINED WEIGHT!
STOMP STOMP

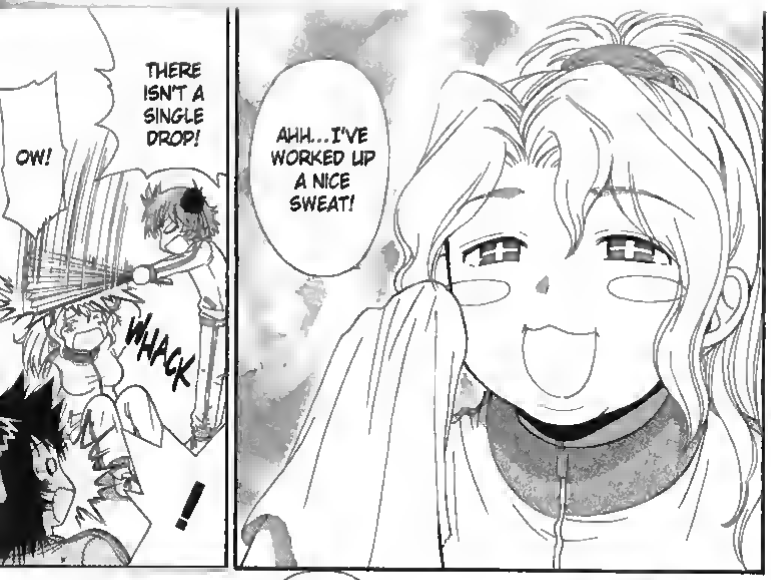
VEEK
THUD
OH, WELL. IT'S ALL RIGHT.
WHEW

WE'VE BEEN EATING A LOT OF TAKEOUT LATELY...
SHE DOESN'T EXERCISE MUCH.
AND MICH IS HOME ALL THE TIME



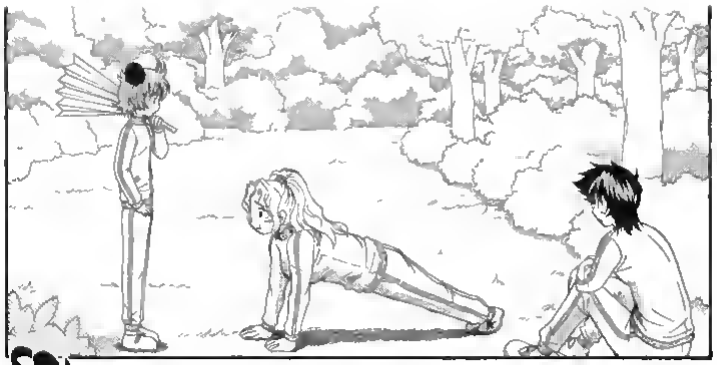
LET'S DO SOME PUSH-UPS AND CRUNCHES!
OKAY?
GAH
GAH
GAH
BUT IT MAKES ME SO TIRED ...
IF YOU DON'T MOVE YOUR BODY, OF COURSE YOU GET OUT OF SHAPE.
YOU DON'T WORK OUT ENOUGH.
HFF
HFF

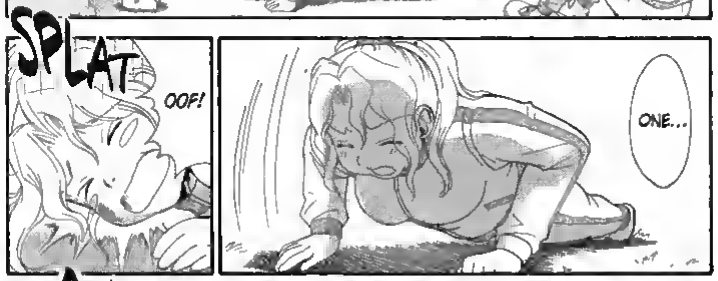
BUT THAT'S HARD ...
WHAT?
TIME TO DIET!
YOU'RE OUT OF SHAPE!
IT'S NOT ALL RIGHT!
RIGHT AFTER DINNER ...
SHF
MM...
I'LL CHANGE MY WAYS!
!!!!
OH, ALL RIGHT!
IT'S UNHEALTHY TO GAIN WEIGHT SO QUICKLY.
WAAH ...
WE START TODAY!
RIGHT NOW!


THERE ISN'T A SINGLE DROP!
OW!
WHACK
!
AHH...I'VE WORKED UP A NICE SWEAT!

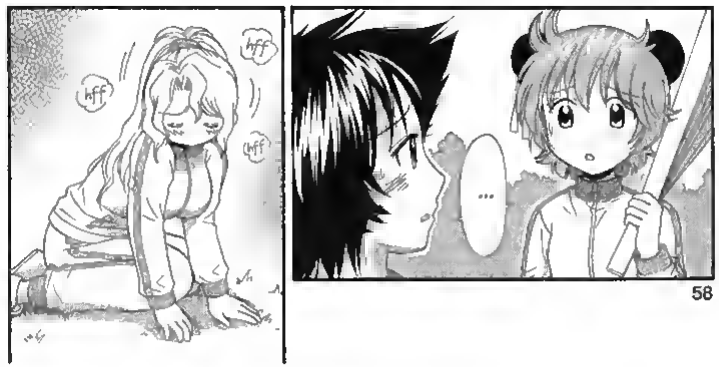
AND A DIET SHOULD START SMALL AND WORK OVER TIME.
SUDDEN, HEAVY EXERCISE CAN HURT YOU.
SO WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?
SHE'S SO WEAK.
THIS IS BAD!

OHHH...
HOW?
HO HO HO... WHETHER WE'RE FAT OF SKINNY, WE'RE STILL THE PAPER SISTERS.
I'LL GET IN SHAPE WITH BOOKS!




SPLAT
OOF!
ONE...

WAK
OW!
ARRGH
ONE...
OOF!


hff
hff
hff
...

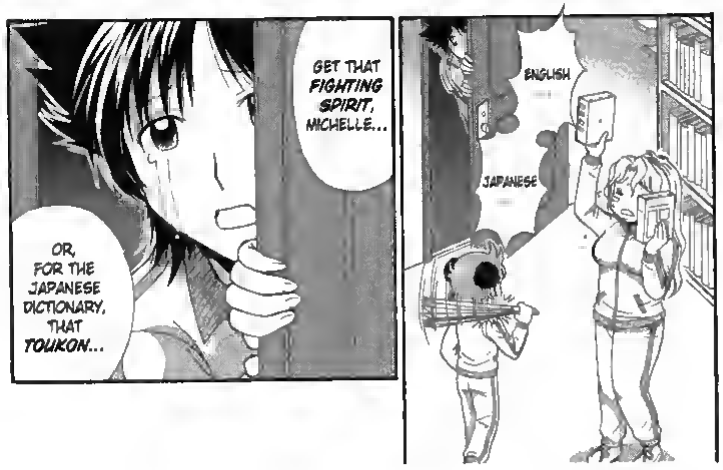
OUCH!
THUK
I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE!
DICTIONARY
SLIP
YOW!

WOOOM
...

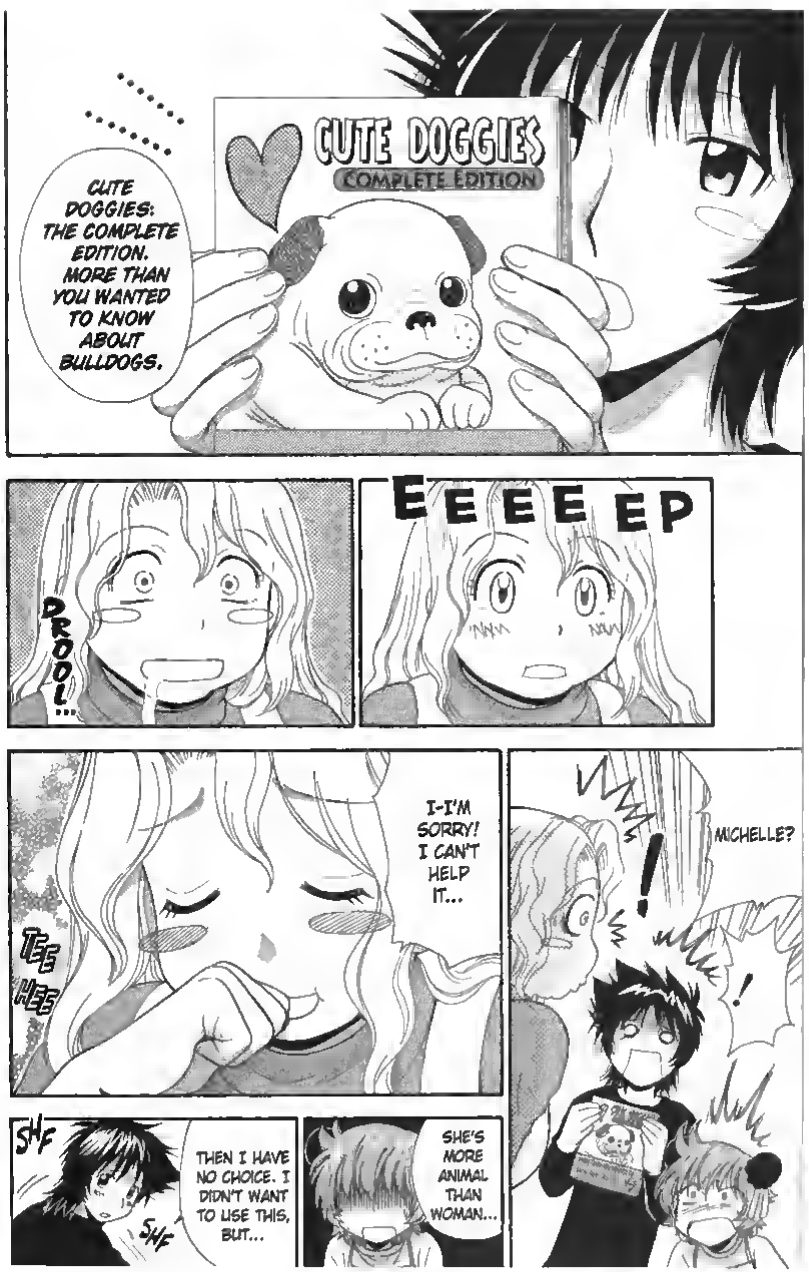
RUSTLE
I CHECKED A BOOK-STORE AND...
ARE THERE BOOKS LIKE THAT?
MAYBE YOU SHOULD READ A BOOK THAT WILL TAKE YOUR MIND OFF YOUR APPETITE.

HOO
ENGLISH!
JAPANESE!
HOO
ENGLISH!
JAPANESE!

TOO BAD! ANOTHER 100 REPS WITH THE DICTION-ARIES!
ANITA..
...MY ARMS ARE SO TIRED...

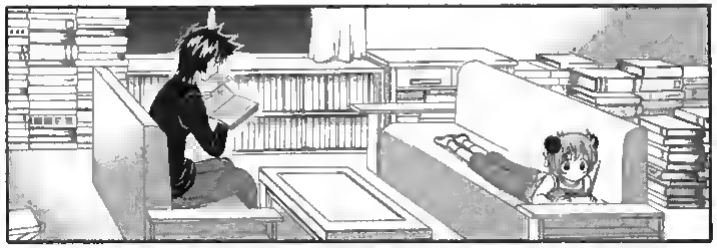

GET THAT FIGHTING SPIRIT, MICHELLE...
OR, FOR THE JAPANESE DICTIONARY, THAT TOUKON...
ENGLISH
JAPANESE

NOOO!!
"100 SHOCKING PHOTOGRAPHS! EARTHQUAKE, LIGHTNING, FIRE, SCREAMING GIRLS! ALL GUARANTEED TO RAISE GOOSE BUMPS! COMPLETELY UNCENSORED!"
BAM
!
BAM
!
AARGH!
WAK
NOOO!
NOOO!


CUTE DOGGIES
COMPLETE EDITION
CUTE DOGGIES: THE COMPLETE EDITION. MORE THAN YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT BULLDOGS.
DROOL...
EEEEEP
TEE HEE
I-I'M SORRY! I CAN'T HELP IT...
!
MICHELLE?
!
SHF
SHF
THEN I HAVE NO CHOICE. I DIDN'T WANT TO USE THIS, BUT...
SHE'S MORE ANIMAL THAN WOMAN...

HERE. THIS IS VOLUME ONE.
OH, THIS SOUNDS INTER-ESTING.
TAILBONE
1
IF YOU WANT TO READ THEM, YOU'LL HAVE TO WALK ALL OVER HONG KONG.
WE HID THE REST OF THE VOLUMES.
HERE'S A MAP!
...

THMP THMP
EEEK!
NOOO ...
NOOO ...
THUD
!
EEEK!
AARGH!
PLEASE TAKE ME
BRR
BRR

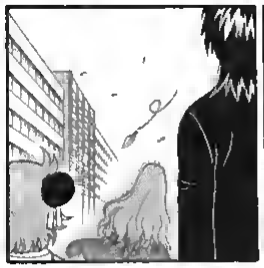


WELL... YOU KNOW HER...

I WONDER IF MICHELLE IS OKAY.

SO DID I...
BUT I LEFT THE BOOKS IN SOME PRETTY DANGEROUS PLACES.

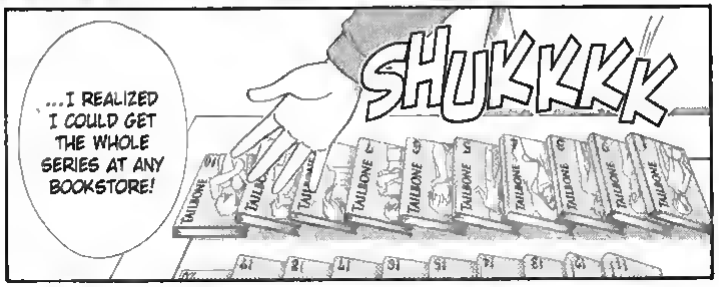
FWP
I SWEAR I'LL READ EVERY VOLUME!
I WON'T COME BACK UNTIL I DO!

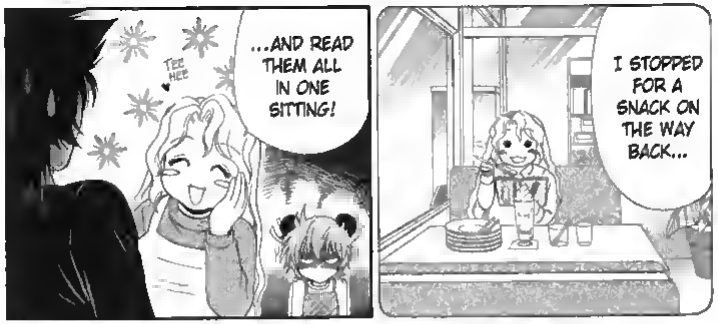


YUP
HANG IN THERE!
ALL RIGHT

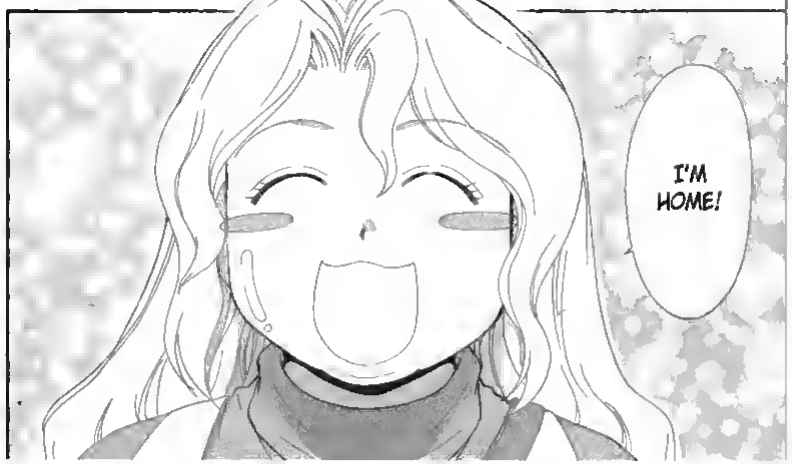
LOOK AFTER THE APARTMENT, NOW.
SHUK

YOU WALKED ACROSS HONG KONG ALREADY?
NO. AFTER THINKING IT OVER ...
THAT WAS FAST!


...I REALIZED I COULD GET THE WHOLE SERIES AT ANY BOOKSTORE!
SHUKKKK
TALLBONE


...AND READ THEM ALL IN ONE SITTING!
TEE HEE
I STOPPED FOR A SNACK ON THE WAY BACK...

!
GHAK
WE CAN'T BACK DOWN NOW!
BAM
MAYBE WE OVERDID IT...
SHOULD WE GO GET HER?


I'M HOME!

...EVEN YOUR MIND IS FULL OF FAT!
AS YOU ARE NOW...
WHOA!
!
TIME TO RELY ON MY LAST RESORT!
I'M GOING TO BUCKLE DOWN.
BUT...
SOB...
ANITA, YOUR WORDS HAVE PIERCED MY HEART...
IS SHE GOING BACK TO NORMAL?
TUP
...
YES, YOU'RE RIGHT

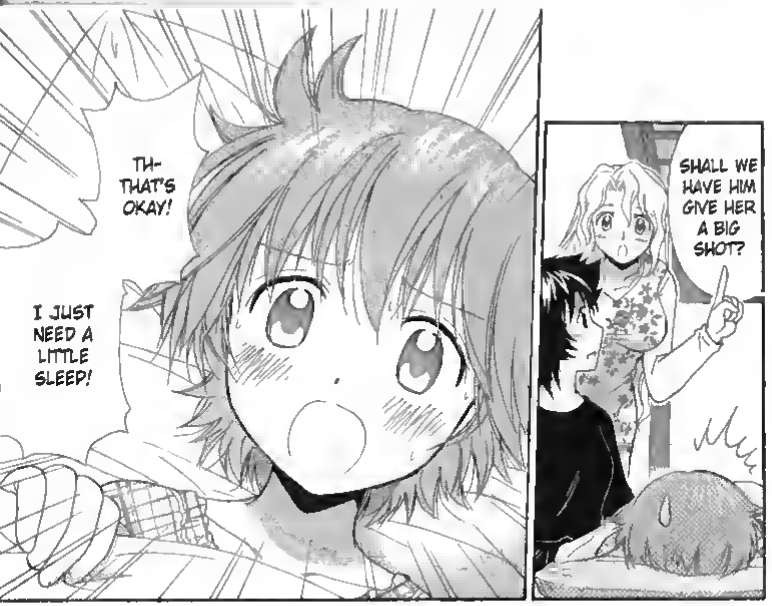
YOU MISSED THE WHOLE POINT!
EEK!
!!
WAK!
SHE'S COMPLETELY HOPELESS!
OH, NO!
EEK! EEK!
BUT I CAN'T LET YOU GET SO WEAK!
I DON'T CARE IF YOU GAIN WEIGHT!

ONE MONTH LATER...
I'M BAAACK!
CONGRA-TULATIONS TO ME!
AND "THANK YOU" TO YOU TWO!
VIP
BOOF
TA-DA♡
VOOM

IF YOU'RE SERIOUS, I'LL BE HAPPY TO HELP.
ANY-THING FOR YOU, SIS ...
AH...
WILL YOU HELP ME?
...I'LL NEED YOUR COOPER-ATION!
DAH
THANK YOU! YOU'RE SO KIND! I WON'T LET YOU DOWN!
WASN'T SHE FIRED UP LIKE THIS BEFORE?
YES...
I'LL SHOW YOU I CAN GET BACK IN SHAPE!

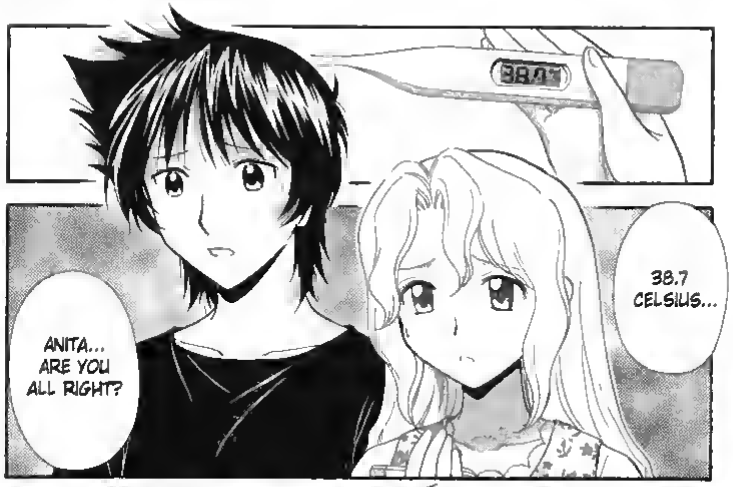
CHAPTER 19

I... KIND OF LIKED IT.
I FELT THE BURN!
I'VE HAD FUN WHILE LOSING WEIGHT. THIS IS MY DREAM DIET!
BY SPENDING ALL OUR MONEY ON BOOKS, WE'VE BEEN TOO POOR FOR FOOD. WE KILLED TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE!
IF WE KEEP IT UP, I'LL SLIM DOWN EVEN MORE!
SALT WATER AND SUGAR WATER FOR DINNER TONIGHT!
YOU'LL SUPPORT ME, WON'T YOU?
HO HO HO HO
WHAT A WAY TO GO...
MICHELLE... COULD YOU GAIN SOME WEIGHT, PLEASE?


TH-THAT'S OKAY!
I JUST NEED A LITTLE SLEEP!
SHALL WE HAVE HIM GIVE HER A BIG SHOT?

YOU'D BETTER HURRY UP!
NEVER MIND ME. DON'T YOU HAVE A MEETING?
I JUST CAUGHT A CHILL, THAT'S ALL!
OH, BUT

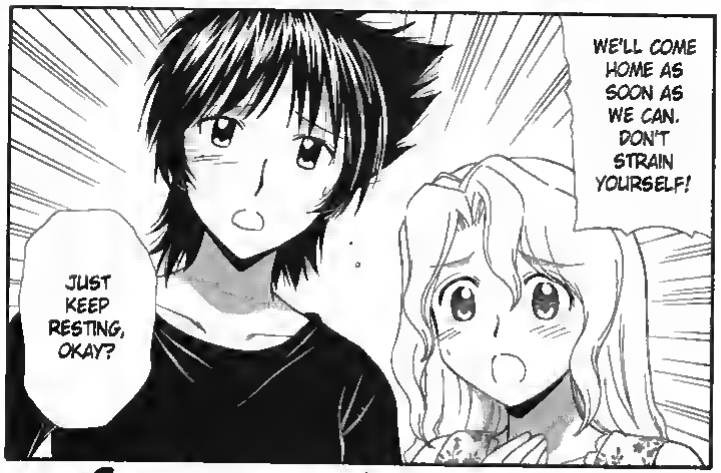
I'LL JUST REST QUIETLY. DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!
I TOLD YOU, I'M OKAY!
BUT WE CAN'T LEAVE YOU ALONE, ANITA...
I'LL STAY.


38.7
ANITA... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
38.7 CELSIUS...

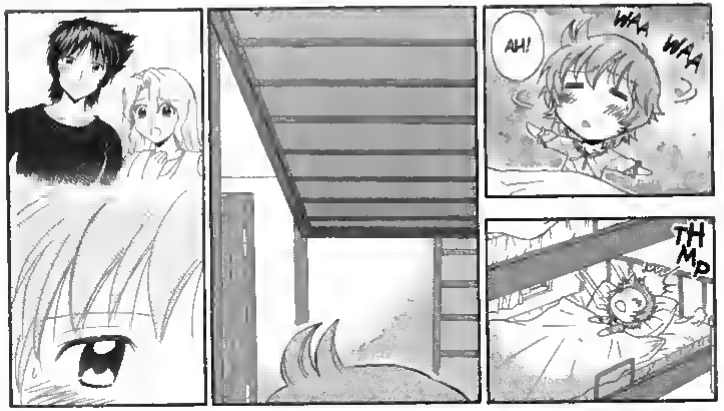
OOO...

MAYBE...
MICHELLE... MAYBE WE SHOULD CALL THE DOCTOR.

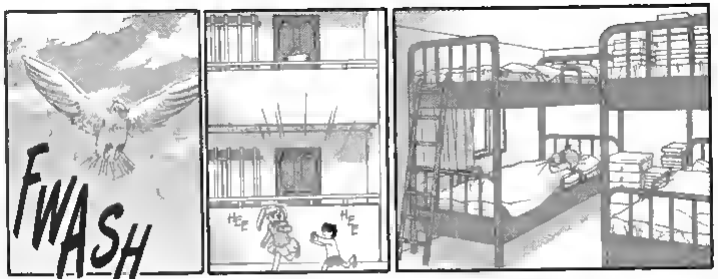
I'M NOT A LITTLE KID!
I'LL BE FINE!


WE'LL COME HOME AS SOON AS WE CAN. DON'T STRAIN YOURSELF!
JUST KEEP RESTING, OKAY?

SLAM


AH!
WAA WAA
THMP

NOT WHEN WORK IS FINALLY PICKING UP...
I DON'T WANT TO BUG THEM...


FWASH

...I'M THE ONLY ONE IN THE WORLD...
IT FEELS LIKE...

COO
I'M SORRY ...
CAN YOU COME BACK LATER?
TIK TIK
DRIP
FW ASH

ISN'T ANYONE HERE?
huff
huff
ANY-ONE!

...WILL I BE ALL ALONE FROM NOW ON?
GOD...

WAA
WAA
SQUEE

LET US WORRY ABOUT YOU.
YOU'RE OUR LITTLE SISTER, AFTER ALL

YOU'RE SWEATING. LET'S CHANGE YOUR PAJAMAS.

GEEZ, HOW COLD.
I GUESS YOU'RE THE SENSITIVE ONE, MAGS.
AT THE MEETING.
WHERE'S MICH?

...TA...
...
AH
ANITA...

IS THE MEETING OVER?
NO. I WAS WORRIED, SO I CAME HOME
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME.

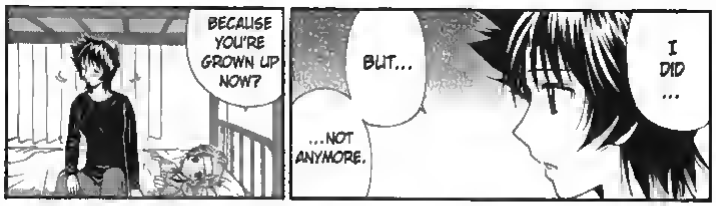
I WAS HAVING A WEIRD DREAM... BUT I CAN'T REMEMBER IT.

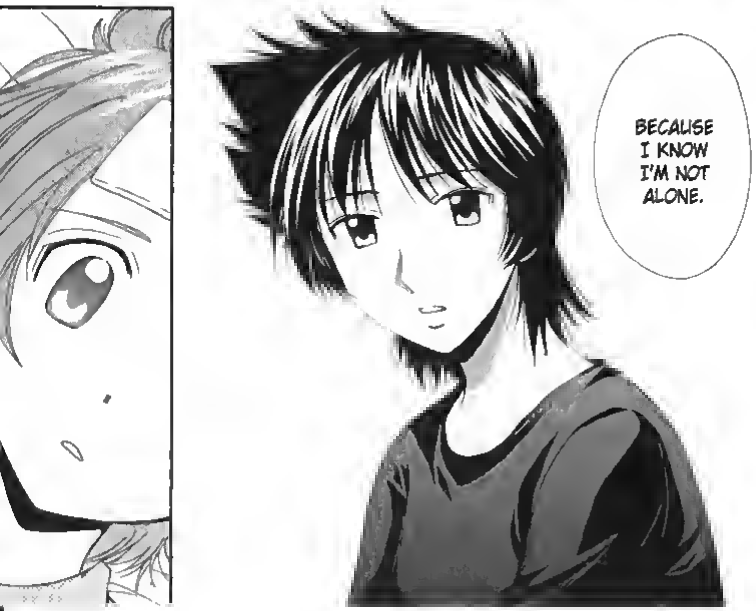
YES
MAGGIE...

OKAY, NOW. SAY "AH."
HEY, I CAN FEED MYSELF.
I DON'T WANT YOU TO SPILL.
SAY "AH..."
...
AHH...

IT WAS MICHELLE WHO TOLD ME TO GO HOME.
...
SHE PROBABLY FELT SORRY FOR ME.
I WAS A LITTLE ANTSY.
ACTUALLY, I THOUGHT THE SAME THING...
...TO BE SO BIG-SISTERLY.
IT'S NOT LIKE MICHELLE ...
...
AREN'T YOU HUNGRY?
HEE HEE

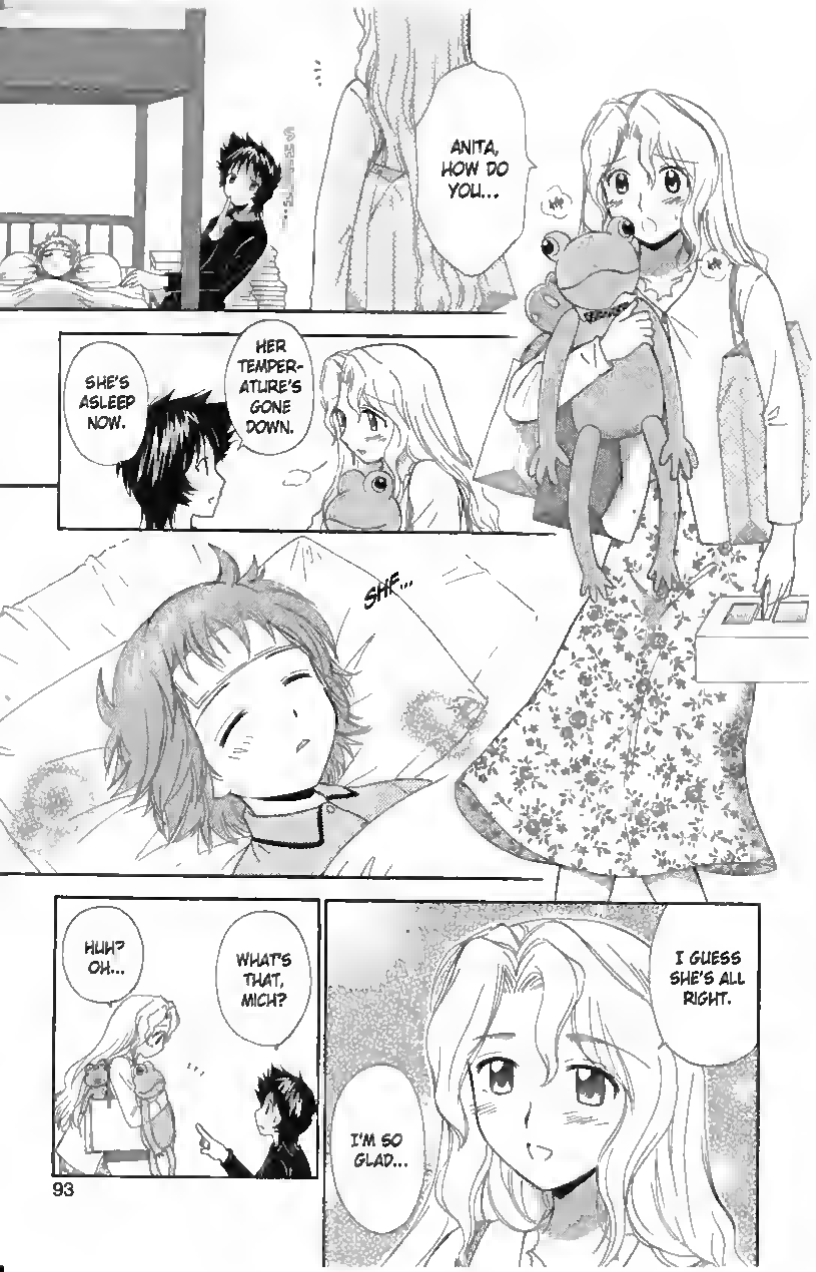
DID YOU EVER THINK MAYBE YOU WERE GOING TO DIE, OR YOU WERE ALL ALONE?
WHEN I WAS A KID?
WHEN YOU WERE SICK IN BED AS A KID, WHAT KIND OF STUFF DID YOU THINK ABOUT?
MAGS?


BECAUSE YOU'RE GROWN UP NOW?
BUT...
...NOT ANYMORE.
I DID ...


BECAUSE I KNOW I'M NOT ALONE.

HUFF HUFF
...
THIS IS GOOD!
MUNCH MUNCH
MUNCH
HEH
AHH...

TUP
IF YOUR FEVER ISN'T DOWN BY TOMORROW, WE'RE GETTING THE DOCTOR, OKAY?
ZPP


ANITA, HOW DO YOU...
SHE'S ASLEEP NOW.
HER TEMPER-ATURE'S GONE DOWN.
SHF...
HUH? OH...
WHAT'S THAT, MICH?
I GUESS SHE'S ALL RIGHT.
I'M SO GLAD...

SHF
GRP
YOU DON'T HAVE TO THINK THAT, EITHER.
TA-DA
I'M HOME!

I DON'T KNOW. PROBABLY SOME OF ANITA'S FRIENDS.
HEH HEH
WHAT?

HM...
SHUFF
THEN THE WORD SPREAD FROM THE SHOP AND...
WHEN I SAID ANITA WAS SICK IN BED, MR. TSAI GAVE ME THIS FOR HER.
THUP
EVEN SOME-THING FROM YUNFAT!
KELLY AND MR. LAM ...
...AND CHIHON ...
OH, YES .. THE BAGS WERE AWFULLY HEAVY.
YOU SHOULD'VE HAD THEM SEND THINGS DIRECTLY HERE.
THEY SENT THEM TO THE SHOP, OR BROUGHT THEM IN PERSON.
NO!
SO YOU WENT AROUND COLLECTING THEM?
MICH... WHO ARE LILY AND ORION?
From Lily & Orion

...?
COO

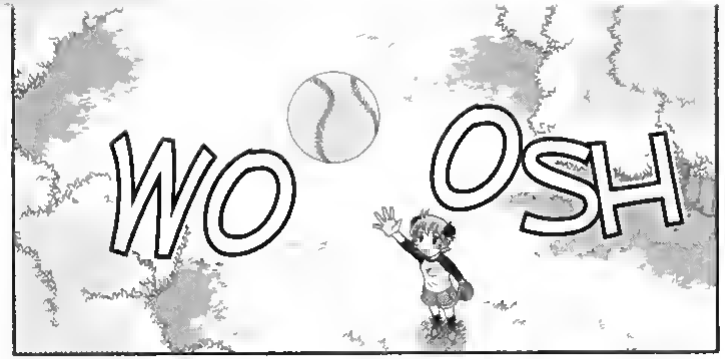
THEY KNOW YOU WELL.
PAT
THAT'S RIGHT. THEY'RE ALL SUCH WONDERFUL PEOPLE.
THESE ARE ALL FOR ME?
AW... THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO...
YAAAAAAY
LET'S CELEBRATE ANITA'S RECOVERY
WHY DON'T WE INVITE EVERYONE TO THANK THEM?
WE'LL GO ALL-OUT AND COOK UP A BANQUET!
NICE IDEA, MAGGIE! LET'S DO THAT!
HUP

MMM!
THE WEATHER'S GREAT!

CHAPTER 20

BOOKS ARE EVEN BETTER UNDER BLUE SKIES.
YUP. PERFECT WEATHER FOR READING A BOOK.

FWp
OH!
...
THANK YOU!

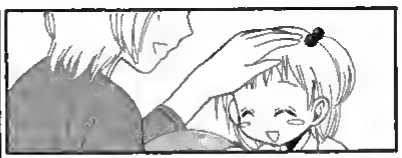

WO
OSH

WHOOSH

HMPH...
WRRR

CH
UP

AWK!
BOP



...

NO-GOOD SISTERS! WHY'D YOU HAVE TO BRING BOOKS?
YOU GUYS'RE SO LAME!

I BORROWED A BALL AND GLOVE!
NO THANKS! LET'S PLAY CATCH!

WE EVEN BROUGHT LUNCH.
WON'T YOU READ WITH US, ANITA?
BUT IT'S SO ELEGANT TO READ A BOOK ON THE LAWN.

AAAH!
HMPH!

...

LATER? ♪
LET ME FINISH THIS BOOK FIRST.
PLOP

DAK DAK
I'M GOING TO BE LATE TO THE FROGS' SUMMIT!
I'M LATE! I'M LATE!
BAH
HUH?
HOP
INTO THE POND!
SPLASH!
HUH? H-HEY ...
WAIT!
I MUST HURRY! HOP TO IT!

!!
BOP
BOP
OH, NO...
WRR
WRR
OWW...
THUP
WAIT!
HEY!
SHOOF
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING TO DO?
THIS IS NO FUN...

CHILD? I'M 12 YEARS OLD!
AAARGH ...
AARGH!
GRAAAH
ONE CHILD COMING UP!
YEOW!
THUMP

IS THIS A DREAM? A MIRAGE?
HE DIS-APPEARED !!
OOO..
SPLISH
PLIP
AARGH!
SPLOOSH
HUH?
GRP

OUR COUNTRY IS SAVED!
TOOT
TA
TOOT
THE LEGEND WAS TRUE!
OUR SAVIOR ANGEL!
TOOT
HUH? WHAT?
I DON'T ...
AARGH!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
TOOT
TOOT
WHAT A HEAVY BUTT!
WHAT A STRONG BUTT!
IT'S NOT BIG!
WHAT A BIG BUTT!
THANKS TO YOU, WE HAVE BEEN SAVED FROM HER CRUELTY.
YOUR BUTT HAS SMASHED THE WICKED WITCH.

HUH?
...
HOORAY!
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
WHAT?
HUH?

PLEASE TAKE THESE COMPANIONS WITH YOU.
TA
DAH
NO... THEY CAN'T BE...
MY SISTERS!
CHAGYA IS THE MONKEY KING FROM THE CHINESE NOVEL JOURNEY TO THE WEST
AREN'T I IN THE WRONG STORY?
HOW DO YOU DO?
HI...

I WANT TO GO BACK TO MY OWN WORLD.
WHERE THE HECK AM I?
DAH
TO RETURN TO THE WORLD ABOVE, YOU'LL NEED THE HELP OF OUR QUEEN
THP
THIS IS BIBLIO-LAND, A LAND WITHIN BOOKS.
THEN WHO DREW THE MAP?
GOAL
THE ROAD TO THE CASTLE RUNS THROUGH PERILOUS REALMS LIKE THE USED BOOKSTORE OF FLAMES, THE BOOK WAREHOUSE ICE SLOPES, AND THE EXHIBITION AND SPOT SALE, WHICH IS INHABITED BY A MONSTER.
NO ONE HAS EVER GOTTEN THROUGH IT ALIVE.
START
BIBLIOLAND
BUT YOU'RE OUR SAVIOR, SO WE CANNOT LET YOU GO ALONE.
...
BECAUSE IT'S SO DANGEROUS, THIS BYPASS WAS BUILT.

I CAN'T HELP IT! I'M THE ONLY ONE WITH A FLYING CLOUD!

YOU SURE GET TO TAKE IT EASY, DON'T YOU?

YOU CALL THIS A HIGHWAY?
TAK

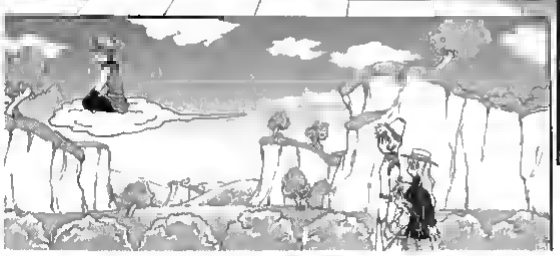
WUP
NOW, NOW. ROAD TRIPS ARE FUN!
BUT WE'VE BEEN ON FOOT FOREVER!

GR
MMMMMM
?!
WUP

GRR

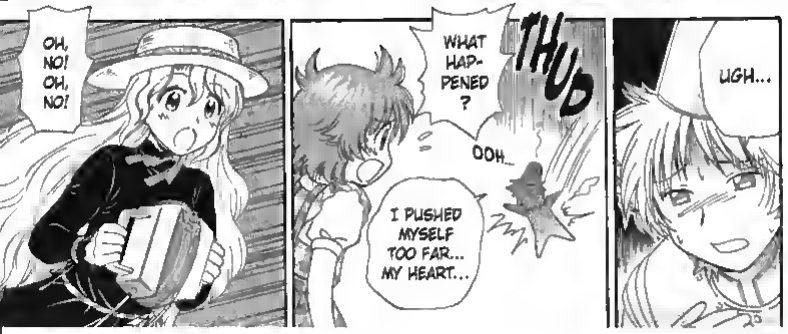
I DON'T NEED ...
I WANT A STRONG HEART SO I WON'T BE AFRAID TO READ SCARY BOOKS.
I WANT TO GO TO THE CASTLE TO GET A BRAIN SO I CAN READ LOTS OF BOOKS!
HOW PERFECT.

LET'S GO TO THE CASTLE!
COME ON! FOR THE SAKE OF ALL OF OUR WISHES!



I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THIS...

KR
A
K
CLAP
CLAP
YOU'RE WONDER-FUL, WOOD-CUTTER!
WOW!


OH, NO! OH, NO!
WHAT HAP-PENED ?
THUD
OOH..
I PUSHED MYSELF TOO FAR... MY HEART...
UGH...

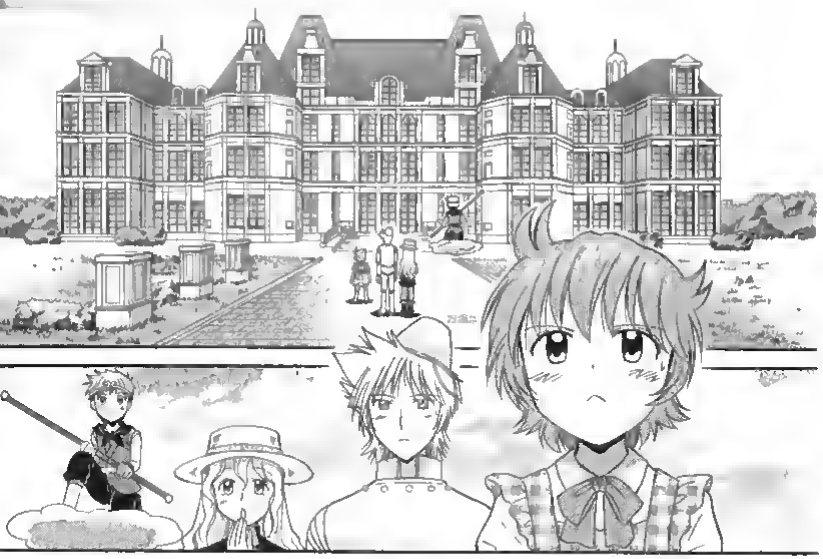
GRRM
GRRM
!!
GRAAAAAH
AARGH !!
DAKKA
DAKKA

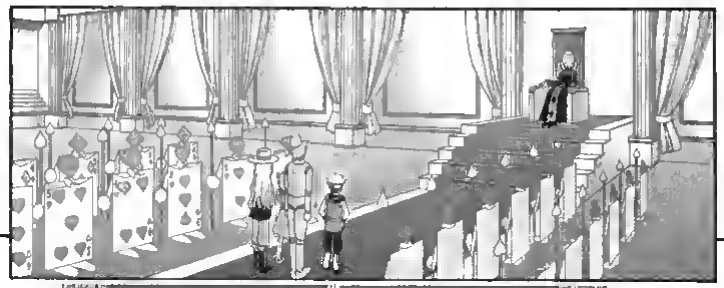
BAH
SHOOOF..

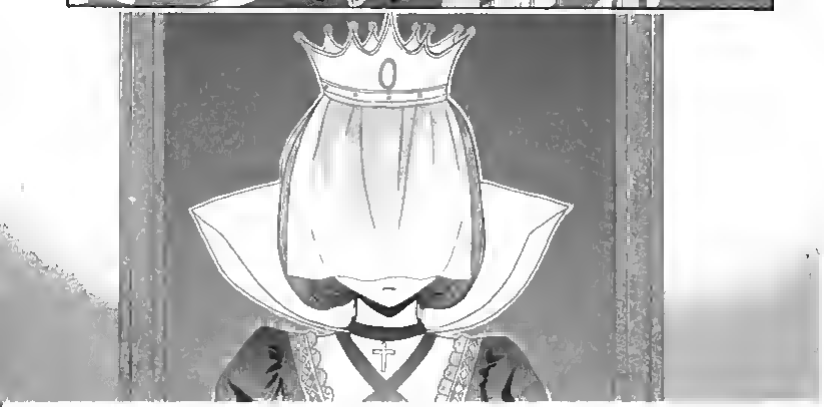
SHK

WOOD-CUTTER ?
TAK
!!

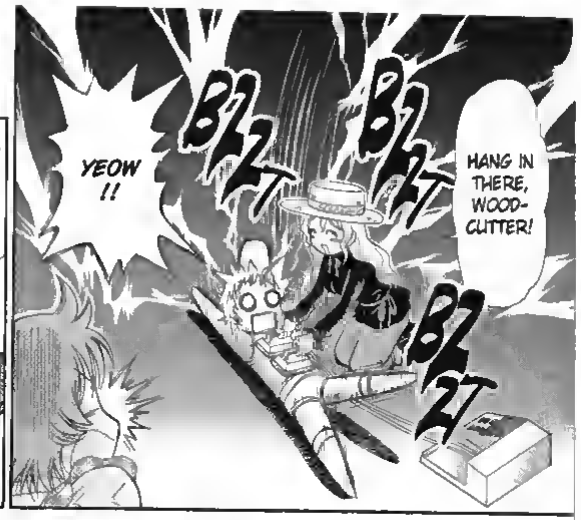
NO WAY!
THIS IS THE FAST LANE, ALL RIGHT!







OH, DEAR. THE POWER WAS ON HIGH.
SHIVER


YEOW !!
BZZT
BZZT
BZZT
HANG IN THERE, WOOD-CUTTER!

SHE REALLY DOES NEED A BRAIN..
BE SURE TO CONSERVE ELECTRICITY, EVERYONE! ♪

TAKE THEM!
...
THANKS
BAH
HERE WE GO!
YO
OH
THWP

I WILL GRANT YOUR WISHES... ON ONE CONDITION.
I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU WANT.
YEEP!
HUH?
YEAH? WHAT IS IT?
A STRONG HEART...
PLEASE GIVE ME A BRAIN!
...AND SO I'D LIKE YOU TO RETURN ME TO MY WORLD!
ER...I WANT... UM...
FORGET IT! ANYWAY, IF I DID THAT, I COULDN'T GO HOME!
?!
YOU MUST BECOME MY VASSALS AND WORK HERE IN MY CASTLE FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIVES!
YOU'LL SPEND THE REST OF YOUR LIVES FILING BOOKS!
!!
ZHAK
IN THAT CASE, I'LL JUST THROW YOU INTO PRISON!
YOU WANT TO GO HOME, RIGHT?
GO TO THE QUEEN AND MAKE HER UNDERSTAND.
LEAVE THIS TO US.
SHF
HUH?
OH, THANK YOU!
SCARE-CROW...

FWOOSH

THE QUEEN'S JUST A LITTLE GIRL!
!
SOB
DRIP
DRIP
I'VE BEEN ALL ALONE IN THIS CASTLE...I WANTED SOME FRIENDS...
I'M SORRY... BUT... BUT...

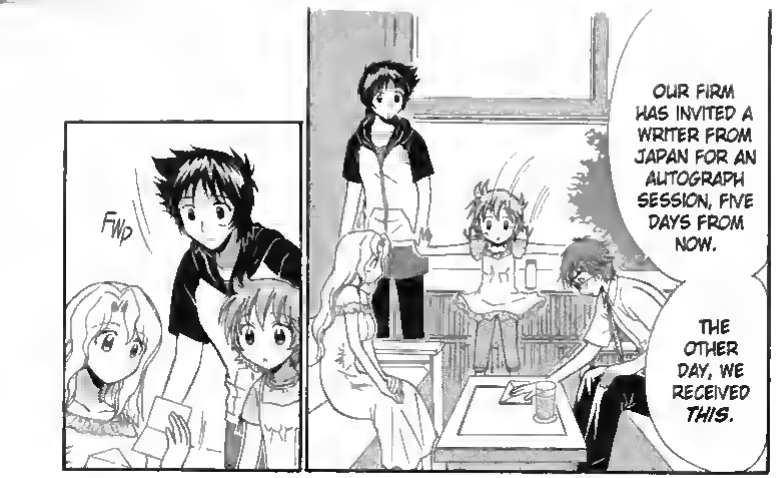
NOW!
WAK
WAK
WAK
TAKE THAT!
SHUP
FLIP
DK
HI-YAH!
ZAK

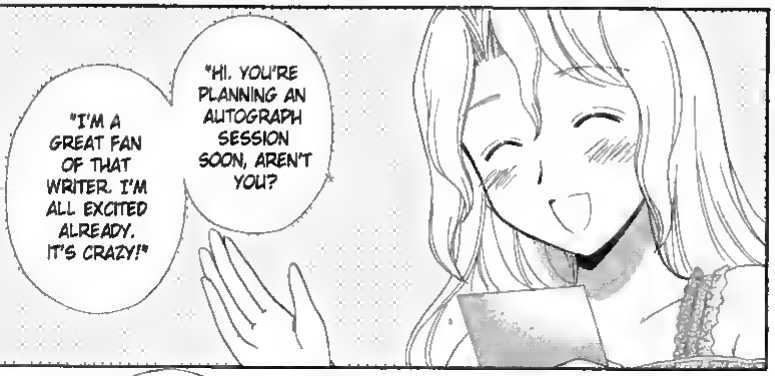
...TA...
NITA...
UH... HUH?
ANITA!
YOU GOT KNOCKED OUT BY A BASEBALL.
OUCH... WHAT HAPPENED?
THANK GOODNESS! YOU'RE FINALLY UP!
YOW
HUH?

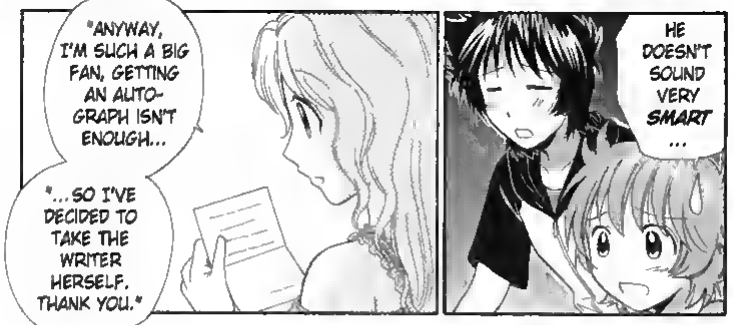
REALLY ?
I DON'T WANT TO BE A VASSAL, BUT I CAN BE YOUR FRIEND. I'LL COME AND PLAY WITH YOU.
YOU SHOULD'VE SAID THAT TO BEGIN WITH.
WHAT ?
...BUT LET'S MEET AGAIN AS FRIENDS.
SHF
YEAH. I'M GOING HOME TODAY...
POOOOOF

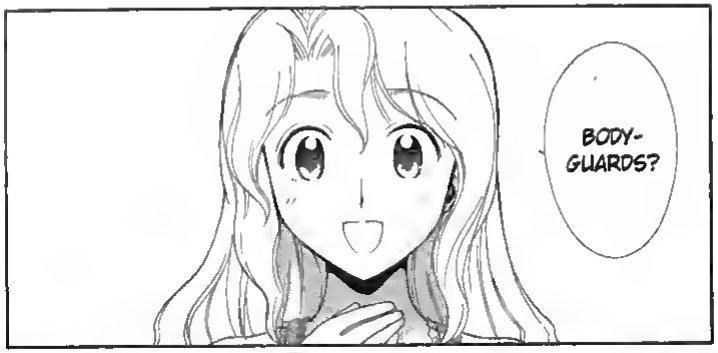
CHAPTER 21

SO IT WAS JUST A DREAM...
WHAT KIND OF DREAM WAS IT?
I CAN'T REMEMBER TOO MUCH ...
ALICE IN WONDERLAND
ANNE OF GREEN GABLES
...BUT IT WAS A HAPPY DREAM.


FWp
OUR FIRM HAS INVITED A WRITER FROM JAPAN FOR AN AUTOGRAPH SESSION, FIVE DAYS FROM NOW.
THE OTHER DAY, WE RECEIVED THIS.


"I'M A GREAT FAN OF THAT WRITER. I'M ALL EXCITED ALREADY. IT'S CRAZY!"
"HI. YOU'RE PLANNING AN AUTOGRAPH SESSION SOON, AREN'T YOU?

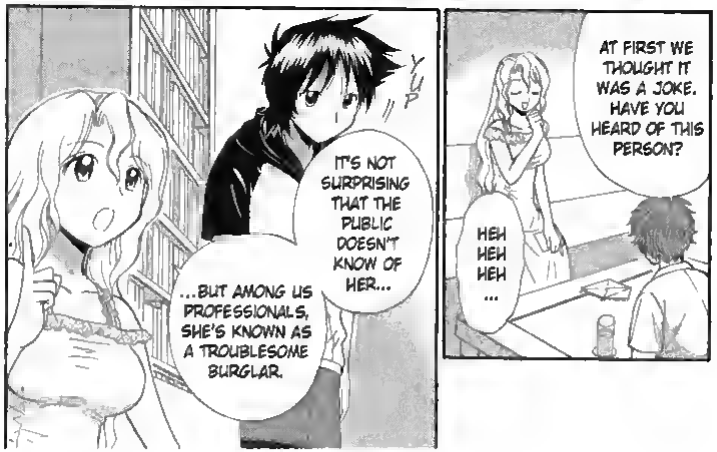

"ANYWAY, I'M SUCH A BIG FAN, GETTING AN AUTO-GRAPH ISN'T ENOUGH...
"...SO I'VE DECIDED TO TAKE THE WRITER HERSELF. THANK YOU."
HE DOESN'T SOUND VERY SMART ...


BODY-GUARDS?

YES...

N... NOTHING...
WHAT'S WRONG?
KOFF KOFF

...
HEH...
WENT DOWN THE WRONG PIPE, EH? YOU'RE SO SLOPPY, ANITA!


YUP
IT'S NOT SURPRISING THAT THE PUBLIC DOESN'T KNOW OF HER...
...BUT AMONG US PROFESSIONALS, SHE'S KNOWN AS A TROUBLESOME BURGLAR.
AT FIRST WE THOUGHT IT WAS A JOKE. HAVE YOU HEARD OF THIS PERSON?
HEH HEH HEH ...

WE THINK SO.
WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?
IS THIS A KIDNAPPING THREAT?

IT'S SIGNED...
GULP
WHO'S THE IDIOT WHO SENT IT?

PFFFFFT
..."LILY THE READER EXTRAORDINAIRE."

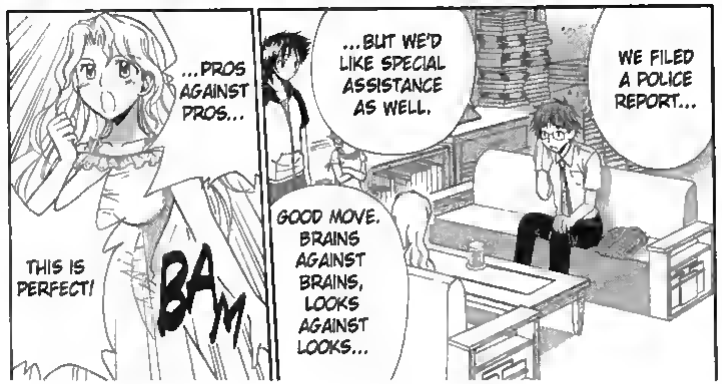
GOOSH
VERY WELL. WE SHALL TAKE ON THIS JOB!
YIKES!

W-WE'LL DO OUR BEST...
WE HAVEN'T DONE TRUE DETECTIVE WORK IN A WHILE!
BRILLIANT THIEF VERSUS THREE BEAUTIFUL SISTERS!

THANK YOU.
THANK YOU. WE'LL BE COUNTING ON YOU.

SHE'S ADROIT AND FLAWLESS. SHE NEVER FAILS TO GET HER BOOK!
HOHOHO
SHE'S A BRILLIANT THIEF AND AN AMAZING BEAUTY!
OF COURSE. I'VE NEVER SEEN HER
WHO'S SHE TALKING ABOUT?

ER NEVER MIND...
SHE'S JUST A DOPE.
hmph


...PROS AGAINST PROS...
THIS IS PERFECT!
BAM
...BUT WE'D LIKE SPECIAL ASSISTANCE AS WELL.
GOOD MOVE. BRAINS AGAINST BRAINS, LOOKS AGAINST LOOKS...
WE FILED A POLICE REPORT...

OKAY, OKAY. AND WHERE ARE THOSE TWO?
HA HA HA
THEY'VE GONE TO CHECK OUT THE VENUE
I'LL DEAL WITH THAT WHEN IT HAPPENS. PLEASE DON'T TELL MY SISTERS ANYTHING, MR. TSAI.
NO WAY... IT'S EMBARRASSING.
AH..
IT'LL COME OUT ANYWAY WHEN YOU FIND LILY.

WAIT'LL MICHELLE MEETS UP WITH THE REAL THING.
YEAH, SHE'S AN AIRHEAD.
SAY, HAVE YOU HEARD ANYTHING ABOUT LILY LATELY?
NOTHING MUCH.
SHE SEEMS TO ACT ON WHIMS.
SHK
OH, HELLO.

OH, MY... THAT'S A DANGEROUS JOB.

WHY DON'T YOU TELL YOUR SISTERS EVERYTHING? YOU SOLVED THE CASE, AFTER ALL.
YEAH. LILY'S SUCH A PAIN.

BOOK LOVERS DO SEEM TO FLOCK TOGETHER.
SHING
THIS IS WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR, ISN'T IT?
I TOLD YOU, I HATE BOOKS!
THANKS.
?
SHOOF

HI.
DID YOU FIND THE BOOK I ASKED ABOUT?
!
OH.
KNOW EACH OTHER? WELL, UH...
YOU KNOW EACH OTHER?
HA HA... I SEE.
ANITA!
YOU?
BAH

I JUST FEEL LIKE WRITING.
I CAN'T HELP IT.

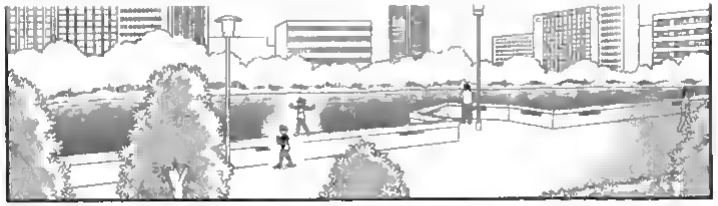
UH-HUH..
WHEN YOU'RE WATCHING A SOCCER GAME, IT MAKES YOU FEEL LIKE PLAYING, RIGHT?
...
WELL, I DON'T BLAME YOU
SORRY. I WAS JUST SURPRISED.

YEAH. IT GIVES DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF THE INTERIOR OF THE CONTINENT.
THAT'S A WEIRD-LOOKING BOOK.
WHAT IS IT? A HISTORY BOOK?

I'M USING IT FOR REFER-ENCE.
NO.
FOR WHAT?
?
YOU NEED IT FOR SCHOOL?

!
...
FOR MY NOVEL...
YOU'RE WRITING A NOVEL?
NOTHING, BUT...
WHAT'S WRONG WITH A KID WRITING BOOKS?
AREN'T BOOKS WRITTEN BY ADULTS?
BUT YOU'RE JUST A KID!

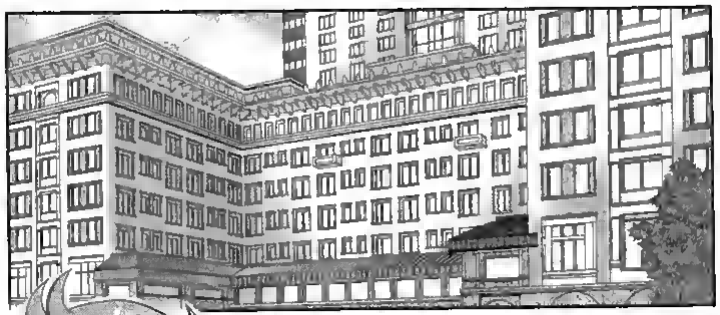
AFTER READING SOME BOOKS AND MEETING THAT WRITER...
...I WANTED TO BE LIKE HIM.
...



MAYBE I NEED A DISGUISE
THEY'RE HIRING SECURITY GUARDS, TOO. WE'LL JUST BE THERE TO HELP.
YOU SHOULD LEAVE BODYGUARD WORK TO THE PROS.

YOU SHOULD COME TO THE AUTOGRAPH SESSION.
TUP
MY SISTER WAS EXCITED ABOUT HER... BUT I WASN'T INTERESTED.
IT MUST BE HARD FOR THAT WRITER. SHE'S JAPANESE, RIGHT? WHAT'S SHE LIKE?
HM...
AT LEAST MEMORIZE HER NAME OR SOME OF HER BOOK TITLES.

SURE.



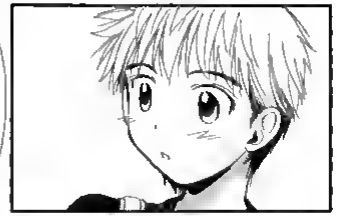
BYE.
SEE YOU!

...

I'LL COME IF I HAVE TIME.

WHEN YOU WRITE YOUR NOVEL...
HEY!

...LET MY SISTERS READ IT, OKAY?



..LET ME .. UM...

MAGS... UH...
...
SHOOOM
TA
DAH

DON'T PANIC.
THERE MIGHT BE TRAFFIC FROM THE AIRPORT.
NUP NUP
THEY SHOULD BE HERE BY NOW ...
THE LOBBY'S THE SIZE OF OUR APARTMENT SQUARED ..
BOY...
WOW!
BAM
WHAT'S WRONG ?
NOT HER.
G-Dmp

...
IS SHE THE WRITER?
"SEN-SEI"?
I UNDER-STAND.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP. SENSEI IS TIRED, SO WE'D LIKE TO SEND HER DIRECTLY TO HER ROOM, IF WE MAY.
SHE
BAM

TAKKA
...
LET'S GO.
PAT
OH, HERE THEY ARE.
TAK
TAK
WELCOME TO HONG KONG. I'M KOK, THE MANAGER.
THESE ARE THE MEMBERS OF PAPER SISTERS DETECTIVE COMPANY.

I'M SORRY ...
I AM JUST A KID...
ANITA!

HEY!
THUD

TAK

SENSEI!
CRASH
OH!
ANITA!

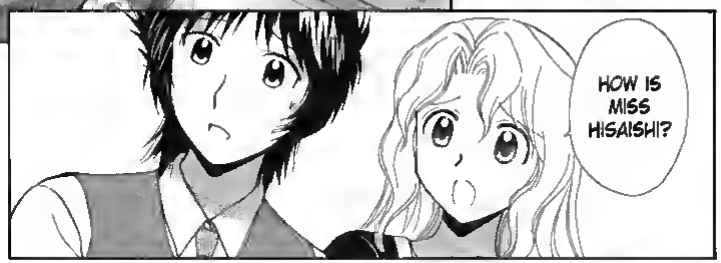
I GOT CARSICK .. OOG!
I-I'M SORRY...
HUH?

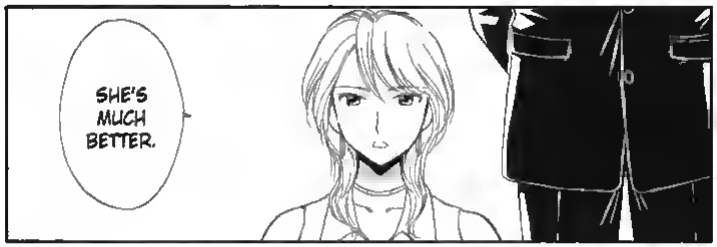
...
WE APPRE-CIATE YOUR HELP.
THIS IS MISS HISAMI HISAISHI.
HUH ?

BUT SHE'S JUST A KID!

CHAPTER 22

GRRR
WE'RE THE SAME AGE! THIS IS DISCRIMI-NATION! DISCRIMI-NATION!

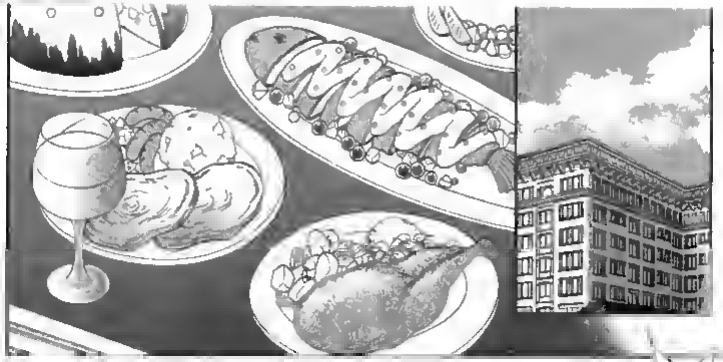

HOW IS MISS HISAISHI?


SHE'S MUCH BETTER.

SCRUB
SCRUB
OH, MAN!
WHO CARES ABOUT THAT KID? SHE CAN GET HERSELF KIDNAPPED FOR ALL I CARE!
IT'S BIGGER THAN OUR OFFICE!
AND I HATE THIS BATH-ROOM!

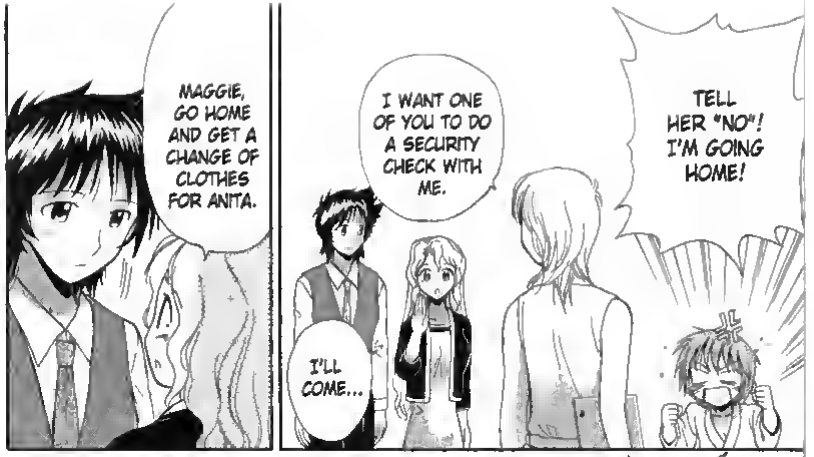
THAT'S QUITE A RESPONSIBILITY...
...DEPENDS UPON US, HER AGENTS.
WHETHER SHE GOES ON TO BECOME A GREAT WRITER, OR FADES TO NOTHING...
SLAM
I'D LIKE YOU TO STAND GUARD OVER HER AND TO TAKE CARE OF HER TONIGHT.
IT IS.
...AND DINNER WITH AN EXECUTIVE FROM A FILM COMPANY.
I HAVE A MEETING TO ATTEND...
AND WHY'S THAT?
I DON'T THINK MISS HISAISHI IS UP TO IT.

SHE WAS QUITE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR LITTLE SISTER...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I WOULDN'T GO THAT FAR...
ANITA'S HAPPY TO HAVE GOTTEN ACQUAINTED WITH HER.
BUT I'M SURPRISED THAT SHE'S SO YOUNG.
YES, THAT'S TRUE.
BUT SHE'S ALSO JUST A 13-YEAR-OLD GIRL.
SHE'S A GENIUS.



THEY'RE ALL SUCH PAINS!
WRITERS ARE SELFISH AND SPOILED, AND THEY CAUSE TROUBLE!
HUMPH!
CHOMP
CHOMP

KOFF
KOFF
!
I'M SORRY...


MAGGIE, GO HOME AND GET A CHANGE OF CLOTHES FOR ANITA.
I WANT ONE OF YOU TO DO A SECURITY CHECK WITH ME.
I'LL COME...
TELL HER "NO"! I'M GOING HOME!

IT CAN'T BE HELPED. YOU CAN'T GO OUT DRESSED LIKE THAT, CAN YOU?
OOPS...
YOU MEAN I HAVE TO LOOK AFTER HER? NO WAY!
!?

JUST GUARD THE ROOM FROM INSIDE.
OF COURSE, THERE WILL BE A BODYGUARD IN THE CORRIDOR.
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
HMPH

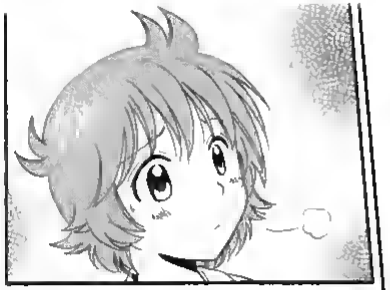
BECAUSE... I WANTED TO TALK TO PEOPLE HERE.
HUH?
PLIP
PLIP
IF YOU THROW UP ALL OVER THEM, YOU WON'T MAKE ANY FRIENDS.
I'M SORRY ...
OH, COME ON! IT'S NOTHING TO CRY OVER!

WHEW
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
GULP
HUH?
YOU SPEAK CHINESE? YOU'RE JAPANESE, AREN'T YOU?
NO, I'M NOT ALL ...
WHY?
I STUDIED UP A LITTLE.
I'M GLAD YOU UNDER-STAND ME.

I'M ANITA.
I'M HISAMI HISAISHI.

SURE.

CAN I CALL YOU HISA?
THAT'S A TOUGH NAME.



FORGET IT.

I'M SICKLY.
I'M SORRY ...

PAY FOR THIS ROOM SERVICE, AND WE'LL CALL IT EVEN.

...
YES. I'M AFRAID IT'S IN JAPANESE.
FWP FWP
FAN-TASY ?
HOW DO YOU THINK UP THESE STORIES?
BEFORE I KNEW IT, I'D GOTTEN GOOD AT IT.
WHEN I WAS HOME ALONE, I ENJOYED THINKING UP STORIES.
I LOST MY PARENTS VERY EARLY. I GREW UP WITH MY AUNT.
SHE HAD TO WORK, SO I WAS ALONE A LOT.

YOU'RE 13?
YOU'RE ONLY A YEAR OLDER THAN ME, BUT YOU'VE ALREADY PUBLISHED A BOOK?
YES... I'M SORRY.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO APOLO-GIZE!
BUT ISN'T WRITING A PAIN?
IT'S FUN TO WRITE STORIES. IT'S NO TROUBLE WHEN YOU'RE WRITING SOMETHING YOU LIKE.
YEAH ?
Little trouble in small forest
SHF
WHAT KIND OF NOVELS DO YOU WRITE?

SNERK
NP
NP
WHERE'S HIGA?
HUH?
MM... MAGGIE?
ANITA...
ANITA...
CHAK

I'M HAPPY TO HAVE EVERYONE READ MY STORIES.
STRANGERS... PEOPLE IN OTHER COUNTRIES... IT MAKES ME VERY HAPPY.
GRRWL
!
IT'S COLD NOW, BUT YOU WANT SOME DINNER?
SOUNDS LIKE YOUR STOMACH'S SETTLING.
BLUSH...
YES!

LET'S DO OUR BEST TOMORROW.
OKAY.
...
MAGS, LISTEN...

...
GLICK

BOY, SHE SURE IS LITTLE.
Hisami Hisa
Hisami Hisa
BUT SHE'S A REAL AUTHOR...
...

Hisami Hisa
SHE'S NOT AROUND.

HEH
WHAT?

forest
in a
Little trouble in another forest
THUMP
OH!
WAAH
THEY FAINTED AT THE SIGHT OF YOU, DEAR.
WSH
RIP

HUH?
HUH?
UGH
AHH
TUP
TUP
THK
UGH
WAAH
WHAT'S UP? HEY!
I DON'T KNOW, BUT TAKE CARE OF MISS HISAISHI!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WH- WHAT'S WRONG WITH EVERYONE?

HOW DO YOU DO, HISAMI? ♡
AWW...
...YOU'RE SO PRETTY.
LET'S GO OUT FOR A LITTLE PRIVATE CHAT.
NO ONE WILL BOTHER US.
SHU...
MMF...

ANITA!
!?
GRR...
BA
M
SKR
EE
WOOOO...
DON'T YOU DARE HURT HISA!

DAK
BAM
WOOSH
OH!
EEK!
THK
SHUKK

CHAPTER 23

I'M YOUR OP-PONENT!
WE'LL SETTLE THIS NOW!

I'VE GOT AN ALLY OF MY OWN.
OH, ANITA...
SHF
ORION!!
KRA
AH!
SH

WE'LL SETTLE THIS NOW!
I'M YOUR OPPONENT!
IS IT BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT YOUR SISTERS WITH YOU?
YOU'RE RARING TO GO, AREN'T YOU?
YOU HAVE NOWHERE TO RUN.
GIVE UP PEACEFULLY.
GIVE MISS HISAISHI BACK TO US...
WE HEARD EVERYTHING FROM ANITA.

WUP
GIVE HISA BACK!
DHK
BAM
BAM
TAKKA
WAM
DA K
BAH
VOOSH

GO!
DA K
!!
WHA M
LEAVE HIM TO ME, MICHELLE! ANITA, GET HISAMI!
YUP
SKREEEEE

OOG
AARGH!
AH
WHOOSH
!
BOOM

TUP
HI-YAH!
WAK
PTOU
!!
DAK
DAK
DAK
DAK
DAK
!?

ANI...
...TA...?
HELLO, SLEEPY-HEAD.
WAIT JUST A LITTLE LONGER, WON'T YOU?
SNAP
OH.
NOW...
...SHALL I GET DOWN TO BUSINESS?
!!
SHF

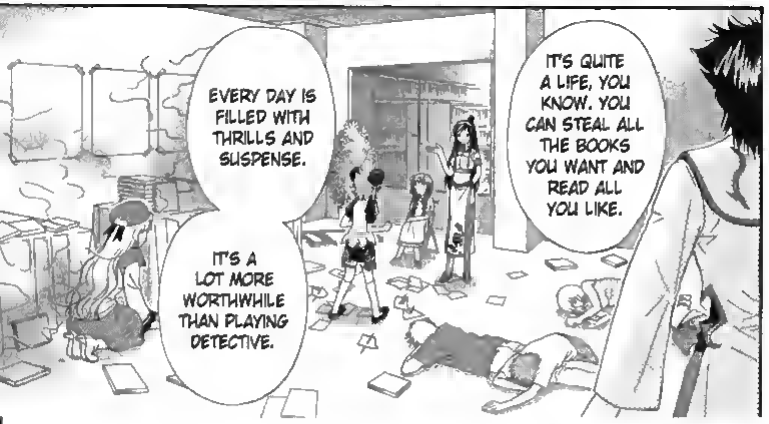
TSK
I'M COMING TO GET YOU!
HISA!
MM...

BA
BAM
...IS A PHANTOM THIEF'S GREATEST PLEASURE!
!!
TOK
TOK
TOK
POOF
!
MICHI! DON'T SHOOT!

YOU SLEAZE!
I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU TRY!
PERFECT.
I THINK I'LL TAKE ANITA, TOO.
MICH ...
THAT'S RIGHT! ANITA IS OUR LITTLE SISTER!
I SEE.
YOU GET ALONG WELL, DON'T YOU?
BUT A THEFT LIKE THIS ..
NOTHING BEATS BEING WITH MY SISTERS!
I LIKE MY HOME!

WOULDN'T YOU ALL LIKE TO JOIN ME?
LET ME ASK YOU.

...


EVERY DAY IS FILLED WITH THRILLS AND SUSPENSE.
IT'S A LOT MORE WORTHWHILE THAN PLAYING DETECTIVE.
IT'S QUITE A LIFE, YOU KNOW. YOU CAN STEAL ALL THE BOOKS YOU WANT AND READ ALL YOU LIKE.

MICH-ELLE?
MICH!
EEK!
!!
GRWWL
MY EYES!

DON'T MOVE!
MICH-ELLE!
WHERE ARE YOU, ANITA?
I CAN'T SEE!

YOU'VE GROWN UP, ANITA.
MICH... MAGS... LEAVE HER TO ME.
I'M FINE.

ANI...
...TA...
I DON'T NEED THRILLS OR SUSPENSE!
I LIKE LAZING AROUND WITH MY SISTERS!
BE-SIDES ...
...DO YOU KNOW HOW HARD WRITERS WORK ON THEIR BOOKS?
YOU SHOULDN'T STEAL THEM! IT'S NOT FAIR AT ALL!

?!
...?
MM...
...THE HECK?
WHAT...
WHAT DO YOU SAY? THE SIX OF US COULD HAVE LOTS OF FUN TOGETHER.
...
NO WAY!
GRR...

YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOUR SISTERS AFTER ALL!
BAM
WHY, YOU...
SHOOM
SHOO
TOK
TOK
TOK
THUK
POOF
OW!

I'M NOT "PLAYING DETECTIVE."
I PROTECT WRITERS!
A LITTLE TOO BRIGHT.
THE GLOW IN YOUR EYES IS SO BRIGHT.
SHF

ANITA!
...IT'S TIME FOR YOUR NAP.
NOW ...
POK
YOU ...
WHERE ARE YOU?
BEHIND YOU!
STOP IT!
GRPPP

CHOP
GRAAH
ANITA!
THP
!!
UGH..

OH, NO, YOU DON'T!
THP
ORION!
SHA
AA
CH
OMP
RATTLE!
ZOOM
ZZZHAAAK

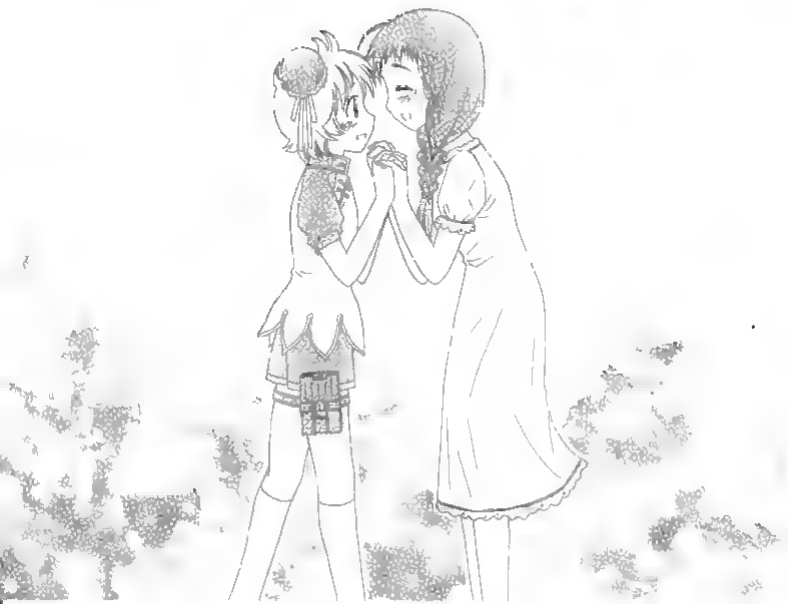
MICH! OVER HERE!
FOLLOW MY VOICE!
SHF
SHOOSH

WSSH
YOU LOSE, AIRHEAD!
SPLA SH
EEEK!

SHOOT, MICHELLE!
CAPTURE US BOTH!
BA M
!?

...WE'RE DEFENDERS OF JUSTICE AND FRIENDS OF BOOK-LOVERS.

HISA!
AH
ANITA...



HA HA

YOU'RE ALL RIGHT?
ARE YOU OKAY?

YOU'RE NOT ORDINARY DETEC-TIVES.
NO PROB. WHO ARE YOU, ANYWAY?
WELL... I GUESS I CAN SAY...

THANKS. YOU WERE A BIG HELP.

I LOOK RIDICULOUS!
RIP
SHUT UP!
COULDN'T YOU FIND A CLASSIER WAY TO CATCH ME?

STOP IT! I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS!!
MEOW
BOING
WUP
WUP

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Ran Ayanaga

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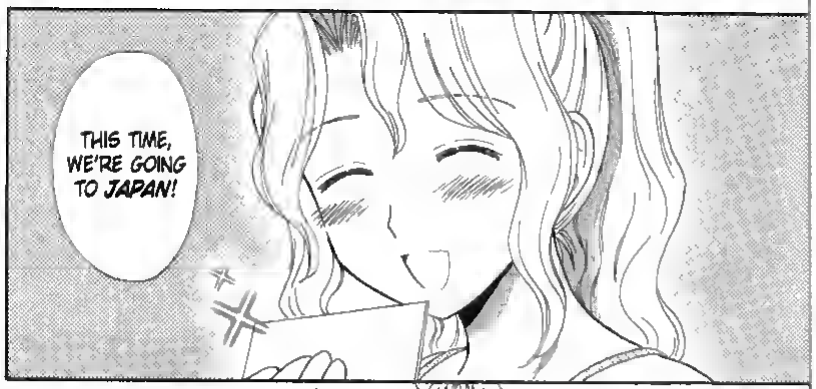


Ⓐ We've gotten off track. Let's drop this for now.

Ⓚ ALL RIGHT. SHALL WE TALK ABOUT VOLUME 4? THE STORY SUDDENLY JUMPS TO TOKYO. HOW ABOUT WE HAVE THE SISTERS CAUSE AN UPROAR IN JINBOCHO[1]?

Ⓐ Yes. That's fine. You're really going all-out, doing everything you want, aren't you? We've had some pretty shocking scenes with the three sisters.

Ⓚ AND YET THE FINAL SCENE WILL BE VERY MOVING. WE'LL SQUEEZE TEARS OUT OF EVERY EYE. ER...THAT'S A LIE. I HAVEN'T DECIDED HOW TO END IT YET.

Ⓐ I'll do the best I can to the bitter end, so I hope you all give me your support. Now, shall we go out for drinks? Beer! Beer!

Ⓚ LET'S CALL SHUTARO YAMADA[2] AND CONTINUE THE IN THAT BAR!

THE END

Ⓐ That's right. It's easier to draw funny, warmhearted gag material. And while I'm writing this, the men are suddenly speaking very seriously about girls with glasses.

Ⓚ YES. I WAS TALKING TO THE EDITOR, AND WE GOT ALL EXCITED AND BEGAN CONSIDERING ALL SORTS OF POSSIBLE TOPICS: GIRLS WITH GLASSES, MARRIED WOMEN, CRADLE-ROBBING, LESBIANS. WHICH WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE WORKED INTO FUTURE STORIES?

Ⓐ Of those four... I'd say any of them would work. (Uh-oh, he and the editor are going on and on about sex. Kurata's laughing...)

Ⓚ AND WHILE I'M WRITING THIS, MISS AYANAGA AND OUR EDITOR WILL PROBABLY KEEP TALKING ABOUT SEX WORDS LIKE "BUSINESSMEN," "HOUSEWIVES" AND "SEXUAL HARASSMENT" ARE FLYING AROUND.

1. Jinbocho: a neighborhood in Tokyo known for its bookstores and publishing companies. It's one of the best places in Japan to find rare books and manga.
2. Shutaro Yamada was the artist on Kurata's previous manga series, **Read or Die**.

Ⓚ SO AM I. I WAS HOPING TO GET EXTENSIONS ON MY DEADLINES, BUT NO SUCH LUCK. BECAUSE OF THAT, I THINK I CAUSED EVERYONE A LOT OF TROUBLE. DO I WORRY TOO MUCH?

Ⓐ As far as I'm concerned, you've never caused me any trouble. In fact, I feel very grateful to you for taking care of me. In the manga, the gags seem to be getting funnier. Michelle seems to be wackier than ever. I'm especially frightened to think about what might have happened after that "7,600 Faces of Michelle" scene.

Ⓚ DON'T WORRY. NO MATTER HOW MANY FACES SHE HAS, MICHELLE IS JUST ONE CHARACTER. SHE'D JUST BUY 7,600 TIMES MORE BOOKS. COME TO THINK OF IT, THAT'S A SCARY THOUGHT. I THINK THIS VOLUME IS FUNNIER, BUT IS THAT KIND OF THING EASIER FOR YOU TO DRAW?

READER KING

HANDWRITTEN INTERVIEW!

A = RAN AYANAGA
K = HIDEYUKI KURATA

Ⓐ Hope you're doing well! Mr. Kurata, we're up to Volume 3. Volume 3! When I started, I didn't think I'd be allowed to draw so many volumes, so I'm very, very happy.

Ⓚ THAT'S RIGHT. AT FIRST, I THOUGHT THIS SERIES WOULD ONLY LAST FOR TWO VOLUMES. IT MAKES ME HAPPY, BUT I WONDER IF WE CAN KEEP COMING UP WITH STORYLINES.

Ⓐ I only have to draw the pictures, but you have the **R.O.D** novels, anime and manga going on at the same time. I'm always amazed you can do it.

BONUS STORY: CLEANING UP DEMONS WITH ANITA THE CLEANER

THE INCANTATION FROZE MAGGIE IN HER TRACKS. "CURSES! WHAT'S HAPPENING?"

"HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT?" CHUCKLED ANITA.

"ANITA," SAID MICHELLE, "THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING! YOU'VE GOT TO CLEAN OUT THE DEMON THAT'S INSIDE MAGGIE."

"OH, RIGHT! OKAY, TIME TO USE MY BRUSH."

ANITA FLUTTERED TO THE FLOOR AND BRANDISHED A CHIMNEY BRUSH–HER STOCK IN TRADE.

"NO, DON'T!" CRIED MAGGIE. "IF YOU SCRUB ME WITH THAT BRUSH, I'LL GET EVEN DIRTIER!"

"HMPH!" SAID ANITA. "I'LL SHOW YOU JUST WHAT I CAN DO!"

"GO, GO, ANITA!" MICHELLE CRIED.

SPURRED ON BY THE FAIRY'S CHEERS, ANITA BEGAN SCRUBBING MAGGIE WITH HER BRUSH.

SCRUB, SCRUB...

"OUCH! ST–STOP THAT!"

SCRUB, SCRUB...

THE BLACK BEGAN TO RUB OFF OF MAGGIE.

"OKAY, NOW FOR THE FINISH!" ANITA SCRUBBED MERCILESSLY AT MAGGIE'S FACE. TO HER SURPRISE, MAGGIE'S BODY BEGAN TO GLITTER AND GLOW.

"OH!" CRIED ANITA AS THE LIGHT GREW. "WHAT'S HAPPENING?"

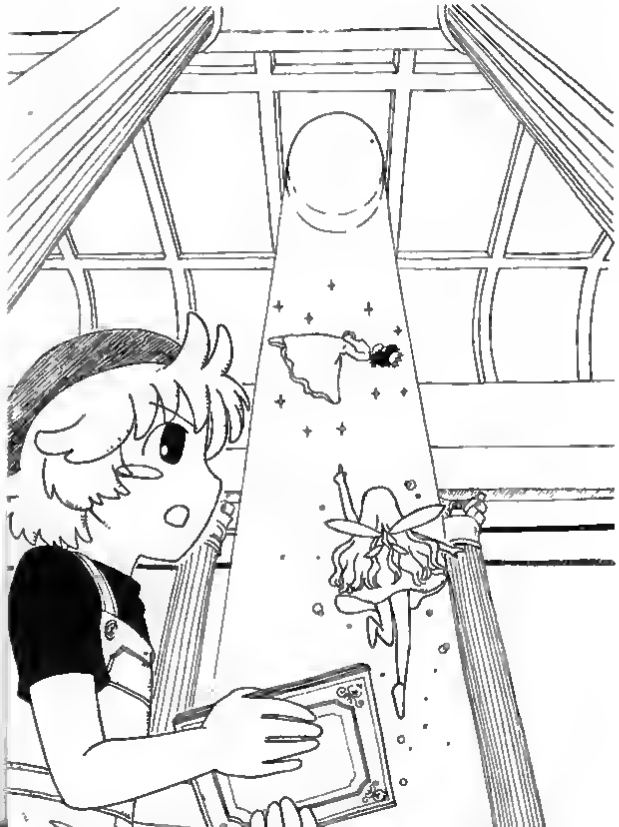
"MAGGIE'S DEMON HAS DISAPPEARED COMPLETELY," EXPLAINED MICHELLE.

WHEN THE BLINDING GLOW FADED, THERE STOOD MAGGIE IN A WEDDING GOWN.

"I GUESS I'M DONE CLEANING," SAID ANITA.

"NO...SOMETHING'S WRONG." MICHELLE FROWNED. "WITH THE EVIL ERADICATED, MAGGIE SHOULD HAVE RETURNED TO HER USUAL SWEATSHIRT–AND–JEANS SELF."

"YOU MEAN MY CLEANING FAILED? YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING!"



HER PRIDE AS A CHIMNEYSWEEP HURT, ANITA RETURNED TO STUDYING THE BOOK.

SUDDENLY...

"HA HA HA HA HA!"

A VOICE SOUNDED FROM HIGH ABOVE. A LIGHT SHONE DOWN UPON MAGGIE.

"OH...IT'S SO BRIGHT!"

"WHO IN THE WORLD COULD IT BE?"

LOOKING UP, ANITA AND MICHELLE SAW A FLYING SAUCER IN THE NIGHT SKY. THE LIGHT WAS BEAMING DOWN FROM THE SAUCER.

A VOICE SOUNDED FROM THE SAUCER. "I AM AN ALIEN FROM OUTER SPACE. I AM TAKING MAGGIE WITH ME."

MAGGIE FAINTED. HER BODY LIMP, SHE ROSE IN THE BEAM.

AN ANGRY GLEAM GLOWED IN ANITA'S EYE. "AFTER EVERYTHING I DID TO RETURN HER TO NORMAL!" ALL HER OVERTIME WORK HAD GONE TO WASTE.

MICHELLE POINTED TO THE SKY. "THIS WON'T DO. LET'S FOLLOW THEM INTO SPACE!"

TO BE CONTINUED...

R.O.D

READ OR DREAM

We are Paper Sisters Detective Company

VIZ Media Edition
Vol. 3

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PARENTAL ADVISORY
READ OR DREAM is rated T+ for Older Teen and is recommended for ages 18 and up. This volume contains sexual themes.

R.O.D-THE TV- AYANAGA WORKS

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● cover illustration by AYANAGA RAN
● cover design & art direction by NOBUHIRO KINOUCHI+ZIN STUDIO

R.O.D-THE TV-
AYANAGA-WORKS

● THESE ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAN AYANAGA WERE USED AS THE COVERS OF NOVELS IN THE R.O.D ANIMATED TV SERIES. THERE ARE SLIGHT DIFFERENCES IN THE ANIME AND MANGA VERSIONS OF R.O.D, SO IT MIGHT BE INTERESTING TO TRY TO COMPARE THOSE DIFFERENCES.

R.O.D

READ OR DREAM

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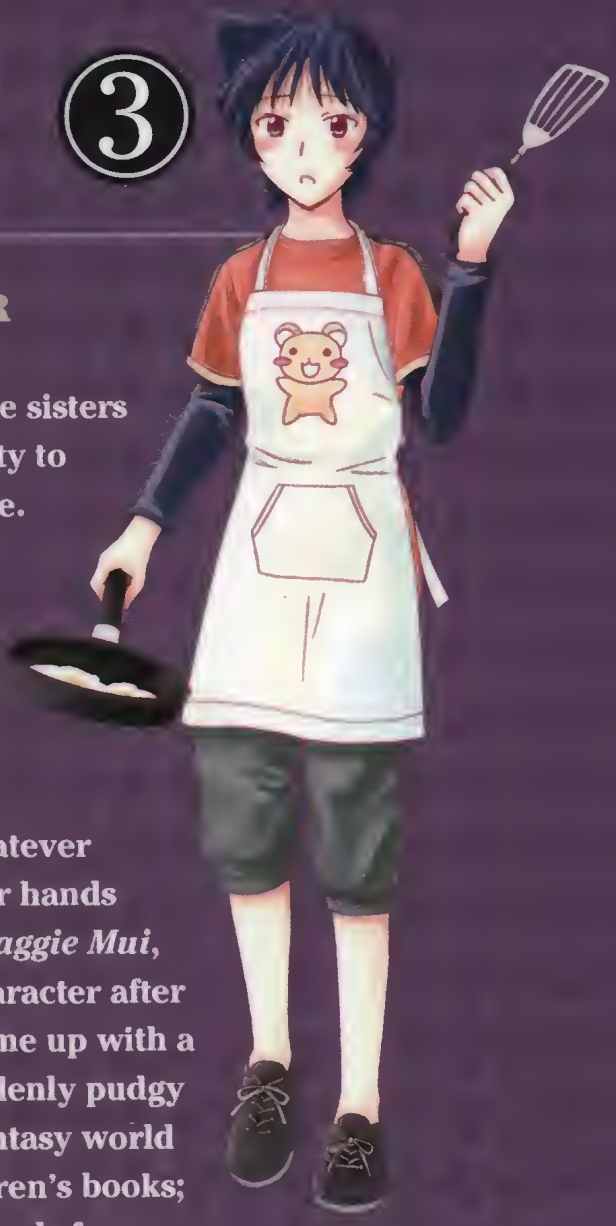
3



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